

# Following the Conquerors

BY JAMES R. HARRIS

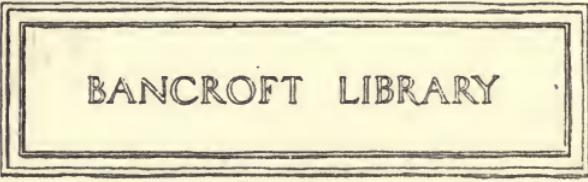
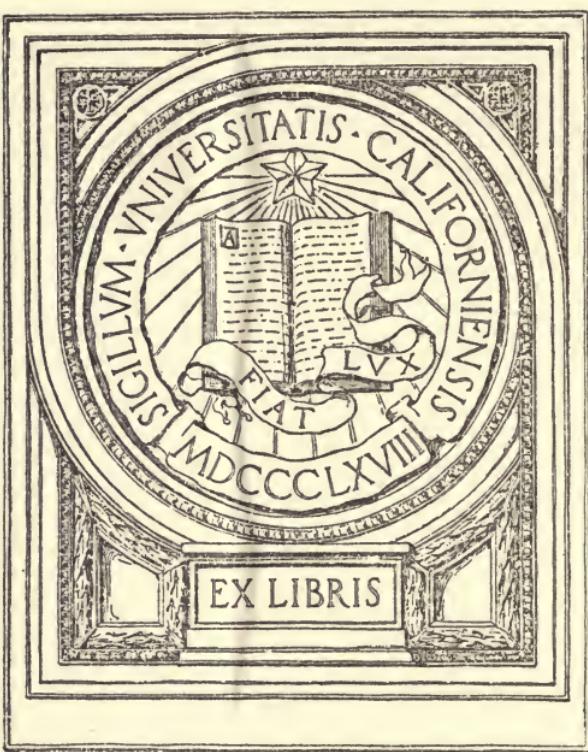
ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT L. COOPER

WITH A FOREWORD BY RICHARD M. STEPHENS

MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

1966







FRANCISCO PIZARRO, CONQUEROR OF PERU  
*(From the original painting in the palace of the viceroys at Lima)*

The Lakeside Series of English Readings

OCEAN STORIES

# Following the Conquerors

THE STORY OF  
THE CARIBBEAN SEA  
*With an Introduction*

*By*  
**CARRIE G. AINSWORTH**

Chicago  
**AINSWORTH & COMPANY**

123  
3

*Copyright 1922  
by  
AINSWORTH and COMPANY*

## FOREWORD

This volume is the first of a Series of Ocean Stories and will be followed by a Series of Stories of the Pacific.

This volume of Ocean Stories having to do with the early Spanish Explorers and Conquerors, it seemed not out of place to insert as our frontispiece the portrait of Francisco Pizarro as distinguished from the generally accepted ideas that the early Spanish Conquerors were always arrayed in armor and helmet.

The publishers desire to express their thanks and cordial appreciation of courtesies shown by the United Fruit Company whose excellent map of the Caribbean Sea appears in this volume and many beautiful illustrations.

Also to the editor of the "Spirit of Missions," a publication of the Episcopal Church, who has cordially coöperated with us and to whom we are under obligation for the map of the Canal Zone and the reproduction of views of San Domingo, Porto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

C. G. A.

*"All travel has its advantages. If the traveler visits better countries, he may learn to improve his own; and if fortune carries him to worse, may learn to enjoy his own."*

*"The use of travel is to regulate imagination by reality, and instead of thinking how things may be, to see them as they are."—JOHNSON.*

## INTRODUCTION

Some considerations relative to the periods of discovery and colonization will be taken up in this article. In teaching periods, keep in mind the following thoughts of Professor McMaster: "The motive of discovery; the effect of discovery upon geographical ideas of the time; the reason why the four great maritime powers of Europe came into possession of our country; why the Dutch acquired the Hudson; why the Spaniards occupied the Gulf Coast; the English the Atlantic Coast; the French, the Great Lakes and the Mississippi; and the profound and lasting influence that the particular arrangement of European settlers had on our latter history—these are the things it concerns us to know, rather than the doings of particular men and the Indian wars of particular colonies."

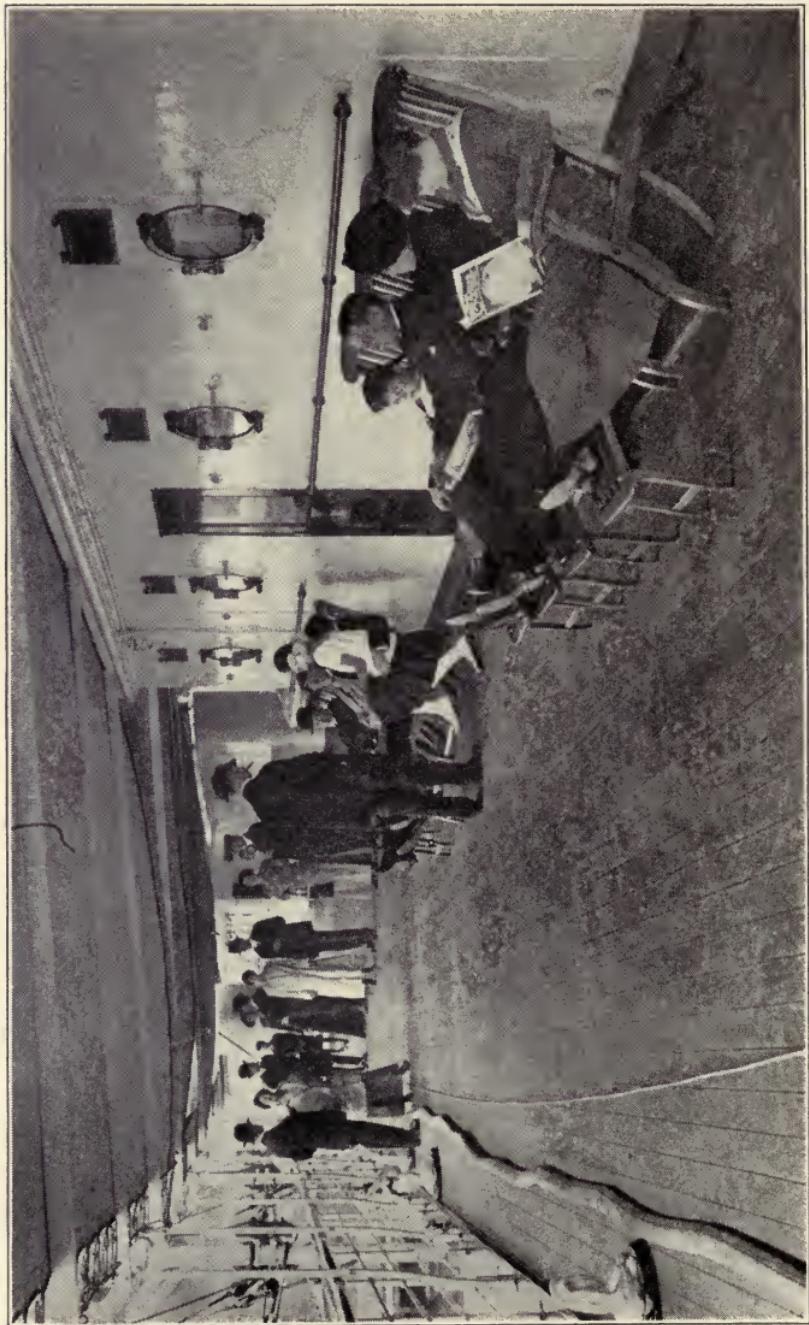
### THE SPANIARDS

By the latter part of the Fifteenth Century, Spain had long been seeking to discover a new route to India. After the voyage of Columbus and of the earlier explorers, Spain claimed its possessions in America, on the Papal Bull which declared that all land west of 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands should belong to Spain. The theory was that Portugal should continue her voyages of discovery and claims for possessions of land to the Eastward

by a path around Africa, and Spain all land to the Westward. The Canary Islands belong to Spain, and it was from this point that her explorers sailed taking advantage of the trade winds. The Spanish explorers confined their voyages largely to the Caribbean Sea and to the Gulf of Mexico because the first voyage of Columbus was made easily and safely and it was thought that the Spice Islands would still be found in the western part of the Atlantic and that the discovery of a water route was still possible. Then, too, Mexico and South America were found to yield gold. Settlements were made at the mouth of the La Platte River because through this river access was furnished to the mines on the plateau of New Grenada now known as Bolivia, and a settlement was made on the coast of Venezuela in 1499 at Lake Maricaibo on account of the pearl fisheries. Settlements were made at St. Augustine in Florida, and the country was occupied to protect the homeward bound ships coming from the ports of the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. Spain itself was a sparsely populated country and its position in the New World was not well maintained or largely extended, due in great part to the fact that a country having a small population would not be successful in establishing, organizing and holding new colonies.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction .....	7
On Shipboard .....	11
Ocean Currents .....	14
Ponce de Leon .....	17
Pamphilo de Narvaez .....	19
Map of Caribbean Sea.....	26
The West Indies .....	26
Amerigo Vespucci .....	27
In the Track of the Trade Winds.....	33
Haiti and San Domingo .....	35
Porto Rico .....	42
The Virgin Islands .....	45
South America .....	49
Colombia .....	50
The Canal Zone .....	55
Gatun Dam and Locks .....	63
The Culebra Cut .....	65
Miraflores Locks .....	67
Story of Alonzo de Ojeda.....	70



## THE STORY OF THE CARIBBEAN SEA

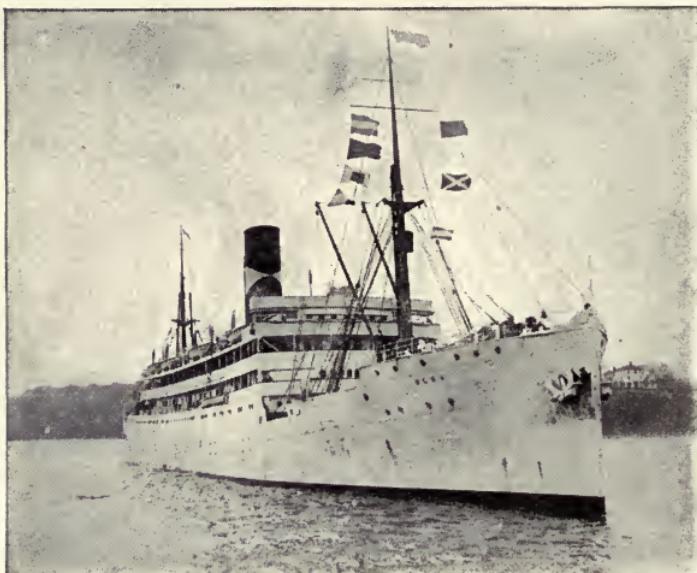
### LEAVING HOME

Our good steamer put off to sea in the afternoon and sailed down historic Chesapeake Bay at night, guided on its way by the flashing lights and buoys. In the early dawn we left on our right Hampton Roads, where was fought the battle of the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*, and, passing out between Cape Henry and Cape Charles, reached the broad Atlantic.

### ON SHIPBOARD

The first act after leaving the dock is to investigate one's stateroom and make the acquaintance of the unknown roommate. Travel was very heavy on this particular trip so instead of selecting what one wanted you took what you could get. The staterooms for first-class passengers have two bed berths, one on each side of the cabin. There are two wash bowls and two closets, and everything necessary for your comfort. I found my roommate to be an interesting young woman from Rhode Island, and we were soon very agreeable companions. Then followed the call to dinner. Everyone responded and ate heartily of a well-prepared meal. Each stateroom has assigned to it a room boy who looks after your needs while on the voyage. A bath boy has charge of a certain num-

ber of rooms. He prepares the bath water and designates the time one may take his bath. Another boy is given you as your dining-room boy and he waits on you at your meals. Upon leaving the ship, you are



A UNITED FRUIT COMPANY SHIP.

expected to give liberal fees to the Steward and Stewardess and the particular boys who have so willingly and well attended to your needs.

You find many of your traveling companions missing at meals the second day. They prefer to remain in their berths and many of them do so for the first few days on account of seasickness or cold weather. As the boat gets into warmer climate, the deck becomes very popular and the deck steward sees that your steamer chair is placed where you will be most com-

fortable. He also makes arrangement for the deck games. For shuttle board, he draws on the deck with chalk the figures for the game; as this game gives one a good deal of exercise, it is a popular one. Deck tennis is also a strenuous game. A net is put up across part of the deck. The game is not played with racket and ball but with small rings or hard rope which must be thrown over a staple on the deck.

In the recreation room, cards, dominos, and other table games are played. The boat has on board twelve musicians who furnish the music for meals and dancing. The Captain appoints a social committee, composed of men and women passengers. This committee plans the social events on the voyage. Dancing and cards are on the program for every evening. Once a week there is a formal dress ball or masquerade party, or a concert in the social hall. During the voyage athletic contest games are played. A record is kept of each player, and at the end of the trip prizes are awarded to the best players. All holidays are celebrated in the social hall with music and speeches suitable to the day, and a special dinner is also prepared. One of the great dinners of the trip is the Captain's dinner, given the night before landing. On Sundays, religious services are held. If a priest of the Roman Church is on board, he holds mass in the early morning. Other denominations hold service at eleven o'clock. If no clergyman is on board, the Captain holds the service. Ships going through warm countries have put up a large canvas swimming tank. This is filled each day with fresh sea water. A large number of the passengers go in swimming

every day and have great sport trying to play tricks on each other in the water. The life on a long voyage is something like a large hotel at the sea shore.

In our journey to the Canal Zone, or Panama, we followed the eastern coast line until, passing Cape Hatteras, we steered more directly to the south; this was for the purpose of keeping out of the course of the Gulf Stream which would materially have delayed our passage since the current would bear us to the north and east. We sailed to the westward of the Bermuda Islands and sighting the lighthouse at the easternmost point of the Island of Cuba, we kept our course to the south passing Haiti and San Domingo on our way to Porto Rico.

## OCEAN CURRENTS

### THE GULF STREAM

After passing Cape Hatteras the coast line of the United States turns off sharply to the Southwest while our course to the south carries us across the Gulf Stream which here strikes off from the American Coast toward Newfoundland.

The Gulf Stream is the most important and best known of the Great Ocean Currents, taking its name from the Gulf of Mexico, out of which it flows between the coast of Florida on the one side and Cuba, the Bahama Islands, and the shoal portion of the Atlantic Ocean on the other side.

At its narrowest portion it has a breadth of fifty miles and is of great depth. It is supposed that it has hollowed out for itself a definite channel because

of the sudden increase of depth at its edges where deep-sea soundings have been made. It has at times a velocity of five miles per hour, pouring along like an immense river.

#### COLOR

The Gulf Stream is of deep indigo blue in color and is sharply defined in its early course against the light green of the ocean.

It abounds with masses of sea weed torn from the coral rocks of the Florida straits through which it passes at its greatest speed and in its warm currents are multitudes of fish and living organisms. It has a warmth of 86 degrees Fahrenheit, which is several degrees warmer than the ocean at the Equator, and it retains this heat, until off the Coast of Labrador, when it falls to 75 degrees Fahrenheit. In midwinter between Cape Hatteras and Newfoundland ships coated with ice and beaten back by the northwest winds frequently turn back to the Gulf Stream and seek relief from their distress in its warmer water. The color suddenly changing from green to blue—the climate from winter to summer—so sudden is the change that it is said when a ship crosses the line, two thermometers, one at bow and one at stern, show a difference of 30 degrees of temperature.

At a certain depth the water of the ocean is of a uniform temperature and there seems little reason to suppose that ocean currents are caused by the rising of heated water to the surface.

The current in the Mediterranean is caused by the evaporation—more water passes into vapor than is

supplied by the rivers of Europe which flow into it. This waste is offset by a strong inward current from the Atlantic Ocean but the evaporation causes the water of the Mediterranean to be strongly charged with salt, thus becoming heavier than the in-flowing surface water and creating an undercurrent which in turn flows into the Atlantic Ocean.

The winds of the Mid-Atlantic blow strongly from east to west over the Tropical Seas and drive the current to the American Coast, where it divides at the Eastern Cape of Brazil and the greater portion bends to the north carrying the currents of the great rivers Amazon and Orinoco, passing through the Caribbean Sea into the Gulf of Mexico. These warm waters are heaped up in this great circular basin 1,500 miles in diameter and are further heated until they rush out through their only outlets, the Florida Straits.

#### EFFECT

The great difference in temperature between the eastern shores of the United States and the western shores of the Continent of Europe has been attributed in great part to the Gulf Stream. Such an immense body of heated water in the northeast Atlantic Ocean must raise the temperature and to this importation of tropical sunshine is due to a certain extent the perpetual green of Ireland, the soft, moist climate of England and Scotland, and the fact that the harbors of Norway on its western coast up to a latitude of 70 degrees remain open while the Baltic Sea much further south is a sheet of ice. England, clothed in

verdure, and Scotland, where the grass grows during eleven months of the year, are in the same latitude as the frozen coast of Labrador. Lisbon, in Portugal, where frost is scarcely known, is in the same latitude as Washington, D. C., where the Potomac River, a mile in breadth, sometimes freezes over in a single night.

### PONCE DE LEON

The story of the discovery of America and the trials and hardships of Columbus are familiar to us all, but it should be well worth our while to give some details of the romance and a description of the stirring adventure of the Spaniards who followed in his wake.

As we sat on deck in the moonlight watching the distant shore of Cuba recede in the darkness, the engineer told us the following story of the search for the "Fountain of Youth."

"Four times, since the Spaniards came to this country, has a century rolled its wheel over the Floridas; four hundred years it is since the men who followed Columbus first set foot on these coasts, eager to seek adventure and to find riches untold.

Now, the land is a common, everyday reality. The planter eats his corn-bread in his cabin; the negro toils at his daily task; the Indian hunts in the pine-land, at peace with the settler; and if there is anything of the poetry of romance of life in the land, it is to be found in the richness of the vegetation and the beautiful life of the everglade, and not in the noble daring of man.

Then, in the Floridas, there was romance in thought

and action in history and in fiction, in dress, in races, and the love of man and woman, and all the world was tame when compared with this El Dorado. Here was the warrior's field; here the adventurer's goal; and hither came the poet to sing of the new land. Here landed the courtly and refined cavaliers of Spain, the most chivalrous nation of the earth. In an age of discovery, when all the world was intoxicated by those visions of wealth and novelty, no land loomed from the waters of the west so suggestive of stirring adventure or so rich in beauty as the so-called Island of Florida.

Its discovery illustrates the romance of the age. Ponce de Leon was a hidalgo of Spain—noble, accomplished, and renowned. With gray hairs had come honors and high command in the Indian Islands, when the tales of a Carib Indian girl, told him of a spring whose waters would bring back the fire of youth, and renew his wasted years. This fountain, she said, was situated on the coast of the great Mexican Gulf, where the oak, when dropping into the sea, is transformed into coral groves.

The old knight sailed with his cavaliers in search of this fountain, and landed among the mangrove bowers and richly colored birds of the western coast, on Easter-day, or day of flowers, of the year of 1512, and thence baptized the newly discovered land by the name of Florida. Not finding the fabled waters of youth, the adventurous knight and his visionary followers succumbed to the old age they had sought to banish, leaving a heritage of poetry and fiction to the coast they discovered. They died by shipwreck

and wars; or, if the legends of those seas may be believed, they still live among the coral reefs and keys that girdle the coast, and there, having found that long-sought fountain of perpetual youth, wander where the coral bowers make forests of beauty—where the sands are strewed with gems, and the summer never wanes. It is said to be a happy sight to the divers there, when the waters are clear, to see the Spanish knights, with their costly armor and their trailing plumes, loitering with the Indian girls of long ago under the pink shadow of the coral.

Following fast in the wake of the explorer, came noble and vassal, for fame, or greed, or heroic quest. Velasquez, De Guerry, Narvaez, succeeded each other as conquerors or visitors to the newly-discovered land.

Pamphilo de Narvaez was no mere adventurer. To family honors and name he added the higher title of a fame won on the battlefield, and wealth and love added their charms to bind him to ease. But he also had heard of that fabled spring, and from the esplanade of his princely home in Cuba had seen the evening sky gleaming with what was said to be the reflection of gold of the Floridas; and so, when the wind came fresh from the eastward, the morning-star saw his black-eyed lady watching from her balcony the lessening vessels that were bearing away her husband and four hundred men with him.

After seven days of favoring winds, Narvaez landed on the western shore of the peninsula, near where the Mecaco River empties into Charlotte Bay, and forthwith the bands of armed men, with their standards and their horses landed on the beach, and took possession

of the land in the name of Spain. A curious spectacle did the adventurers present. There were the chiefs, with their haughty manner, and Moorish war-horses, the soldier with his pike and lance—the blue-steel cuirass, the chain shirt, and Toledo blade—all contrasted with that tropical country of birds and flowers, and the gentle bearing of the Indians that welcomed them. Around Narvaez were gathered many nobles, among them Cobecca de Vacca, the most gallant gentleman of Navarre. There came, also, priests to cure the souls of the benighted—hooded priests, whose convent stood high on the hill of Sierra de Diego, and little boys to swing the incense at the altars; and hounds in couples nosing at the scented air with their tawny muzzles. All the equipment of glorious war and wild sports, and all the emblems of a deep religion swept by Gasparalla Island, and with the sound of the trumpet and the horn landed on the mainland.

But a short history remains to be told. Treachery to the natives aroused revenge. The arrow whistled on every wind; hostile bands disputed every stream. One battle followed another. The troops were divided in different bodies, under different leaders, and fought their way northward, until all but fifteen of that hopeful army found a grave, either on the field of battle or the quicksand swamps. Fifteen, under the command of De Vacca, coasted the Gulf, and gained a shelter in the Mexican colonies. Only one man, a common soldier named Ortez, escaped the others' doom. Being left wounded on a battlefield, he watched his opportunity, and, as night covered the shattered

dead and the trodden field, he crept down to the water's edge, guided by the splash of the sea. Here, finding a canoe of the natives, he hastily gathered some fruit to support him on his voyage, and setting sail, was soon beyond pursuit. He coasted down the shore, only landing at night to gather the turtles' and birds' eggs that were abundant on all the islands, until he reached Cuba, and saw once more the towers of a Spanish town.

A sad day it was in St. Jago de Cuba, when Ortez came back with that Indian boat, and the grim tale of disaster. Solemn-moving men, cloaked to the chin, in spite of the tropical air, clustered together in the Plaza.

Ortez was summoned to the presence of Narvaez's widow. In a few moments he had entered the quadrangular stone court, and stood in a room where the light came through canopied windows, and the air was cool with the splash of waters, whose music brought back to his memories the houses of Spain. The stately dame of the lost knight sat on a cushion by the window. Her eyes were hollow with watching and grief, and her voice was solemnly deep and low. Behind her sat her daughter, with a black veil shrouding her face. The soldier, leaning on his sword, told at her word of command, the story of their cruise, of their landing and bitter war, of how, one by one, the leaders found inglorious deaths by disease, by heat, by arrows, or flood or quicksand, and how presently they had none to command but De Vacca.

"But your chief—your chief, man! Where did he fall—how did he die—did you kill the foeman that

struck him, and honor his corpse as a king's?" demanded the proud woman.

"De Narvaez did not die by my side, or I would have revenged him; nor was his body buried by our band. I don't know how he died. They say he died like a hero; and when attacking a fort at Appalachi, with his good sword cleared a road so far into the stockade, that his men could not get to him, and there he remained and fell."

"And where were you, and did you leave your chief?"

"No; would I come back to Cuba had I done that? I was not with Narvaez's band; they had all separated before into five parties."

"There were Spanish prisoners among the Indians, then?"

"Yes, they seized three or four; but we counted them dead, for they never kept Spanish prisoners."

"What then did they do with them?"

The soldier replied not in words, but taking his unkempt locks in one hand, with the edge of the other he made a circle around his head, and then with the hand gave a twist, and a wave that was horribly significant of the scalping process, that had then but just come to the ears of the Spaniard, and possessed, to his mind, the double terror of mystery.

A groan and a long pause followed this pantomime.

"Soldier," said the lady, "he was your chief, yet you left him in a hostile country; you do not know his fate, but will not honor, a soldier's name, tempt you to return, and seek to bring some tidings of his death?"

"Where is the honor to all my comrades who are buried in those woods? There is no honor there, my lady."

"Where is your religion, man? You swore on the cross in our Holy Mother Church to defend your liege lord and all converts to your faith."

"By my lady, I kept my oath; but where there is no standard, and even the priest is slaughtered by the savages, there is no piety in staying. I have been a true soldier in many a war; but this is no war.. We have lost our ship, our lives, our horses, our chief; everything is gone of that array, and never a penny have we won to repay us all. What, then, could I do alone?"

"Do this for me. I will send you with a pinnace; I will make you a lieutenant before you go, and when you return, I will pay you here in this chamber two hundred ounces of gold. Stay here now as you are, and remain the bankrupt soldier, pointed out as the man who left Narvaez in Florida."

Steadily Ortez weighed in his mind his chances of life, and the golden sum that was as sure to him on the promise of that woman as though belted at his waist. His eye looked at the soft light that came in at the window, and the spattering fountain in the court below, vacantly, while one could count two score; and then turning to the widow, he said:

"I will go," adding with Spanish grace, "and may our Lady Mother keep you well till my return."

In a few days the adventurous soldier was again in the Mexican Gulf, steering for the battlefields where he had left his chief. He sailed among islands cov-

ered with mangroves, and pillared on coral, touching at every prominent point, and threading the broad lagoons where the sea-ferns spread their palms to the light of the upper air. When opportunities offered, he landed on the shore, and tried, by presents and gentle words, to gain from the natives the information



he desired, but they remembered the fierce forays of Velasquez and Narvaez, and only treated with the adventurer to betray.

He was induced one day by the Apalaches to visit the shore and was at once seized; and being

recognized as one of Narvaez's band, was condemned to death. His frightened comrades having lost their guide, made haste to weigh anchor, and sailed away to Cuba, glad to escape from the terrors of that Stygian shore."

The deep pause which followed the narration was at length broken by the Ship's Doctor, who inquired musingly, "And how much is true and how much is only story, I wonder?" The Engineer smiled and answered, "Is it not all written in the faithful annals of \*Garcilesto de Vega?"

\*NOTE:—Of all the writers on the Conquest of America, no one has acquired so wide celebrity, or been so largely referred to by later compilers, as Garcilesto de la Vega. He was born in 1540, and was a Mestizo, that is, of mixed descent, his father being European and his mother Indian.

## THE WEST INDIES

The islands of the West Indies, nearly one thousand in number, form a chain extending in a curve southeast from Florida to the northern coast of South America. The principal groups are called the Greater Antilles to the west and north, the Lesser Antilles to the east and south, and the Bahamas. The two former groups are in turn designated as the Leeward Islands and the Windward Islands; they are generally mountainous and in many cases are of volcanic origin. Some islands are the work of the coral insects and in the Lesser Antilles there are many active and extinct volcanoes.

Several of the islands were discovered by Columbus on his first voyage and in the belief that he had reached that part of the world known as the Indies, these islands were named the West Indies and the inhabitants were called Indians, which name was afterwards applied to the people on the mainland of the adjacent continent.

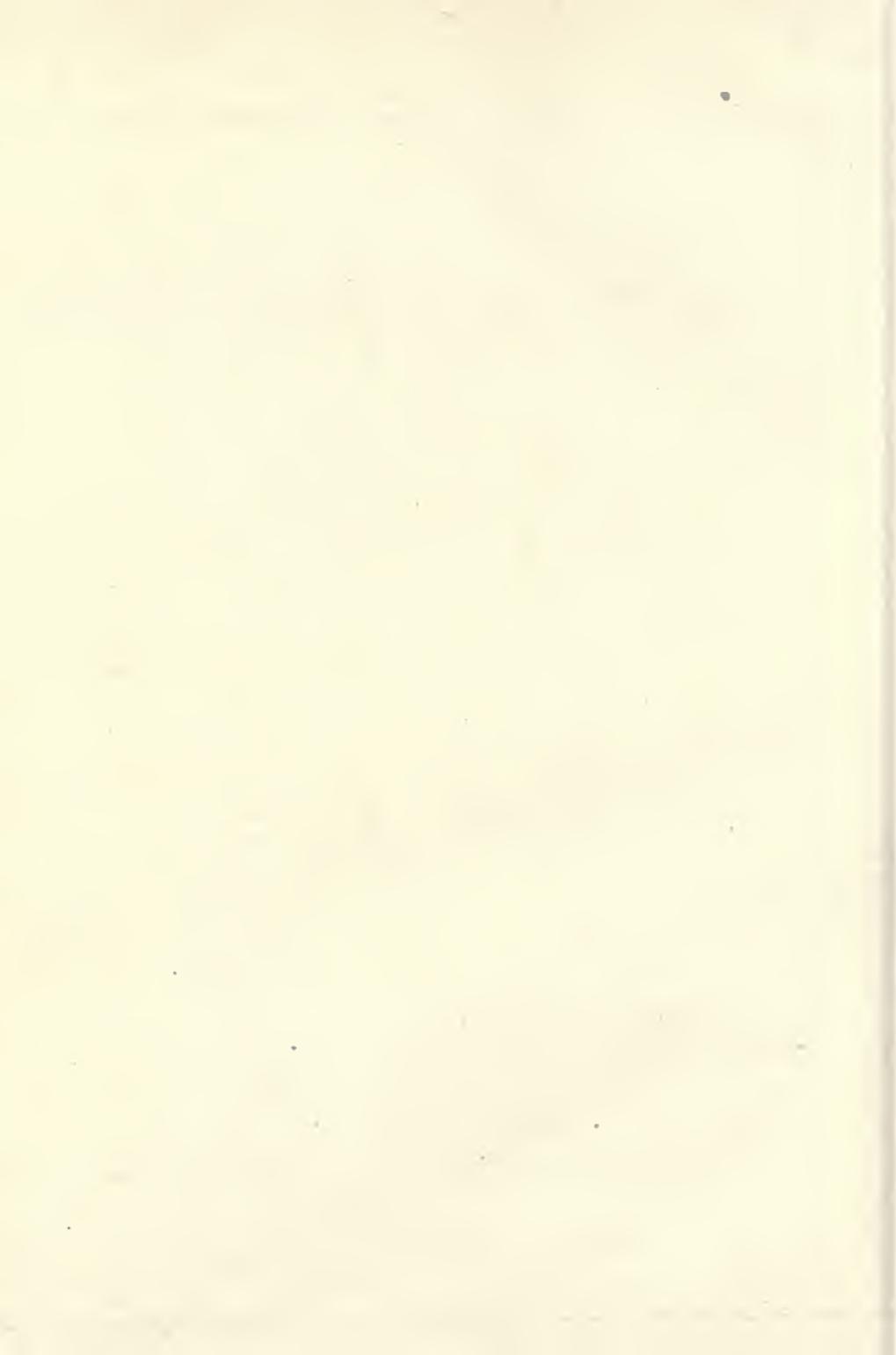
Before the discovery of America, a tradition existed that far to the west of the Azore Islands there lay a land called Antilla whose position was vaguely indicated in the early maps and only eight months after Columbus' return, we find one Peter Martyr writing that the islands which the great navigator had touched upon must be the "Antilla."





**UNITED FRUIT COMPANY**  
*Steamship Service*





Amerigo Vespucci was born at Florence, Italy, on March 9, 1451. In his youth he showed a great liking for natural philosophy, astronomy and geography, at that period favorite objects of study on account of their commercial importance. The success of the Great Navigator inspired him with a passion for discovery and he sailed from Cadiz, in Spain, on the 20th of May, 1499, and explored the section lying between the Island of Trinidad and the mainland of South America and some hundreds of miles along the coast. He made a second voyage under Admiral Pinzon and afterward entered the service of the King of Portugal and undertook two other voyages. His purpose was to discover a passage to Malacca, the extreme point of discovery in the east.

Much unnecessary criticism has covered the name of Vespucci who has been accused of claiming the honor of unmerited discoveries. How America came to receive its name from him is not quite clear; but it is certain from Humboldt's investigation that Vespucci himself had nothing to do with it. The name of the New World probably came from Germany. A selection from his narrative of American voyages found its way to that country and Martin Waldseemuller of Freiburg translated it for a bookseller of St. Diez in Lorraine.

As the first account of the wonderful discovery it was eagerly read; many editions were printed and according to Humboldt it was Waldseemuller who proposed that the New World be called America in honor of the author. Afterwards this

name was generally employed by geographical writers, and even the Spaniards and Portuguese adopted it.

The climate of the islands is tropical, modified by the ocean breezes and in places by the eleva-



A BANANA PLANTATION.

tion of the land. The islands are covered with luxuriant vegetation and the larger ones are well wooded. Tropical fruits and flowers and birds of bright plumage add to the beauty of the scenery. The islands are subject to hurricanes and earthquakes. The principal products are bananas, sugar, rum, coffee, tobacco, etc. The commerce of the West Indies is extensive and valuable.

Cuba and Porto Rico have a large Spanish population but the greater part of the people of the islands are negroes, or of mixed races, with a small number of white people.

**The Greater Antilles** comprise the Islands of Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, and Porto Rico.

**The Lesser Antilles** include all the West Indies east and south of Porto Rico. Most of them belong to Great Britain.

**TRINIDAD**, the largest of the Lesser Antilles, is a British possession noted for its lake of pitch and its mud volcanoes.

The lake of pitch is one of the greatest natural curiosities in the world. Near the shores the pitch is hard. Its surface yields gently to the weight as one walks over it. There are channels of water through it and toward the center the pitch bubbles up.

**BARBADOES** is important chiefly as a British naval and military station. It has a very dense negro population. The capital is *Bridgetown*.

Guadelupe and Martinique belong to France. The Netherlands owns some of the smaller islands of the Lesser Antilles, while Venezuela owns several lying near its coast.

**The Bahamas** comprise a large number of small islands, many of which are uninhabited. Being of coral formation, their elevation above the sea is but slight and their soil thin. The climate attracts many people in the winter, and *Nassau*, the chief city and seat of government, is a noted health resort. The British control the group, and find the sponge fisheries a source of wealth.

The **Bermuda Islands**, though not a part of the West Indies, may be described in this connection. They occupy a position about midway between Canada and the West Indies, and for this reason are of importance to the British Empire, to which they belong. They comprise a large number of small islands, but only a few of them are inhabited. Because of their delightful climate these islands, like the Bahamas, have become noted as a winter resort. They have a considerable trade with the United States in flowers and early vegetables. Half of the inhabitants of the largest island live in *Hamilton*, the capital city.

In the changing conditions of present day warfare, the leading powers in West Indian waters are Great Britain and our own country, although France has a strategic position of importance in the new planning of air routes and submarine bases; and, in the post-war readjustments, economic changes of great importance are now in course.

Commercial interests, naval and air strategy have led Great Britain to send a commission whose announced purpose has been to see what the people of the islands want and if it would be safe to give them a larger share of self-government; but no thought of independence or of transfer to the United States is being considered.

There is a strong movement in Great Britain to form a West Indies Confederation to consist of the islands, Honduras, on the Mainland, and British Guiana in South America, with a seat of government at Trinidad; to have a voice in imperial affairs.

Barbadoes and the Windward and Leeward island groups refused to send delegates to a recent conference at Port of Spain, to consider the proposed consolidation. Barbadoes is 1820 miles from New York.

The sentiment in the English possessions is strong for the British Flag, but commercial interests fear a possible trade retaliation by the United States which is the natural market for all these islands. The British as well as the American West Indies depend almost entirely upon their trade with North America.

Canada, on her part, is reaching a long arm around the United States seeking closer political and trade relations, which seems to have a better prospect than the Confederation plan, for the islands have but small trade with each other and there is little intercourse between them.

Great Britain largely dominates the situation on the Atlantic, possessing as it does, a string of islands and naval bases in a great circle from Bermuda to the east of the Caribbean Sea and extending to the mainland of South America. Bermuda is the principal base of the British West Indies fleet, while the American headquarters is at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Port Castris on the Island of St. Lucia and Port of Spain, capital of the Island of Trinidad, the southernmost of the British Indies, are supply bases and preparations were made a year ago to make an oil and coal supply base at Kingston, Jamaica.

Kingston as a submarine and air base could domi-

nate the Panama Canal, as it is only five hundred and forty miles from Colon. The American base in Cuba is but ninety miles distant and the big



ROARING RIVER FALLS, JAMAICA.

United States Navy Aviation Station at Christobal has sent navy planes to Jamaica.

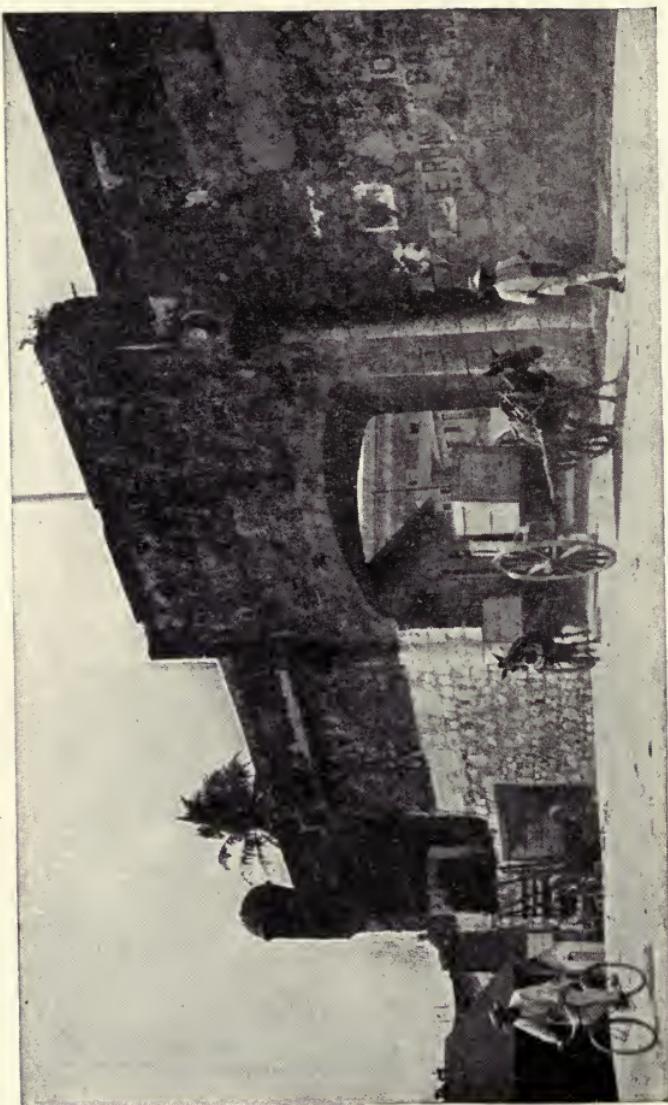
Kingston is situated 1474 miles from New York, almost due South.

# IN THE TRACK OF THE TRADE WINDS

Porto Rico  
The Virgin Islands  
The Dominican Republic



THE GATEWAY OF SAN DOMINGO.



## HAITI AND SAN DOMINGO

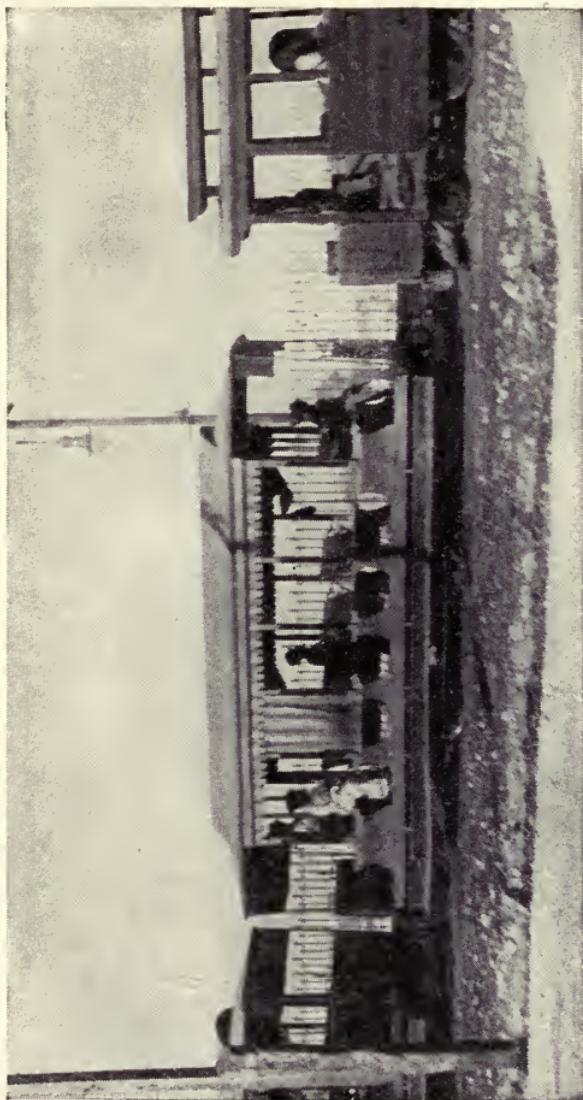
This island is really a northern boundary of the Caribbean Sea and lies nearly in a center between Cuba and Jamaica on the west, Porto Rico on the east, and the Bahama Islands and the open ocean on the north. It belongs to what are known as the "Leeward" Islands, or the Greater Antilles, comprising the four largest islands of the West Indies—Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, and Porto Rico. Its greatest length is about 400 miles with a breadth of 160 miles. It is mountainous and heavily wooded. The range of the Cibao mountains extends from northeast to southwest, forming the spine of the island. It is subject to earthquakes and is perhaps the most fertile spot in the West Indies.

The extraordinary irregularity of the surface—tremendous gorges, crumbling peaks, zigzag stream valleys and the richness of the plant life—clusters of pines, the golden candelabra of the yuccas, the scarlet fringes of the bell-like fuchsias, the trailing clusters of rose-pink honeysuckle, the pink flower sprays of the begonias, the large white rose-like blossoms of the brambles, the dainty foliage of the dwarf bamboos and of countless ferns, the emerald green pastures—all these are elements of remarkable landscape beauty. The foliage is magnificent and gorgeous in hues—the tall shrubs of scarlet poinsetta, the glossy-leaved orange trees hung with fruit, the bread fruit trees with their enormous

leaves of emerald green, the rich blue tints of the bananas, the sulphur-yellow allamandas, the exquisite lavender blooms of the wistaria, the hedges of flossy agaves (Spanish dagger) all go to form scenes of entrancing beauty, through which wind narrow bridlepaths, bordered by fantastic houses and occasional strange cemeteries.

The history of the island is almost unique. In a short time after its settlement the natives were almost swept away by the cruelty of the Spaniards. Then in the seventeenth century, came the French, called "Buccaneers" because they visited the island to kill the wild cattle and dry the strips of beef (*boucan*) in the sun. They generally called the island "Saint Dominique." Columbus had christened his first settlement there "San (or Santo) Domingo" because it was discovered on a Sunday. The aborigines lingered longest in existence in the north-western part of Hispaniola, and the name which they gave to their portion of the country was Haiti.

In 1697 the western portion of the island was ceded to France; this was the first break in the unity of Spanish America. For nearly one hundred years large numbers of African negroes were brought to the island. The mulattoes grew into an intermediate caste and were excluded from citizenship and from slavery. Finally in 1791, the mutual hatred of the three classes broke out into one of the most vindictive struggles in all time. Before the close of the eighteenth century this struggle led to the destruction of the whites and the independence of the colored races. As the insurgents were, in form,



A Wood Burning Street Car.  
PORT AU PRINCE, HAITI.

Catholics, Haiti was now the only Christian community of negro blood on either side of the Atlantic. In 1804 Dessalines proclaimed himself Emperor of Haiti; this change was fatal to French commercial prosperity. Sometimes one state, and sometimes divided, the country alternated between despotism and anarchy. France was in the midst of the Napoleonic wars and had few troops to spare for a trans-atlantic campaign, so after desultory fighting, the rebels achieved independence.

A Republic was proclaimed and a President elected, who soon proclaimed himself Emperor in Port au Prince. Another negro leader in the north proclaimed himself king in Cape Haitien and set up a system of nobility with eight dukes, including a Duke of Limonade, thirty-seven barons, and other lesser lights, all colored relatives of the monarch. Social disorder followed. All semblance of law and order in the interior disappeared. Armed bands of negroes roamed through the country, pillaging and burning. Each negro who could find arms for himself and his followers announced himself as King, or President, or general and set out on a career of conquest. At first the magnificent homes of the former French land-owners offered rich booty, but when these had been sacked and burned, nothing remained, and, as his followers had to be fed, the "general" turned to his own race, who had chosen to continue to till the fields and to live as they had been under the French. Repeated robbery soon reduced them to ruin and desperation. The men, who could do so, removed to the coast cities where



FRENCH FORT OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY,  
ISLAND OF HAITI.

life was more secure, while the rest left their fields and hid in the fastnesses of the hills. Abandoned by their owners, the comfortable dwellings went to ruin. Weeds overgrew the cultivated lands, and in a generation the fertile fields which had once produced magnificent crops lapsed to the tropical jungle from which they had been redeemed.

Seeds sprouted and trees grew in the famous roads, while the island presented a melancholy picture of the results of war, lawlessness and disorder. Its houses and mansions, so substantial that fire and pillage could not entirely destroy them, had nothing left but standing walls. Its magnificent roads were overgrown; and its fertile fields a jungle waste. In the wilderness the natives lived, amid dirt and filth, in tiny huts or huddled together like animals in the open.

The only tranquil period of the island was from 1820 to 1843, when the government comprised the whole of western (French) Haiti and the Spanish or Eastern portion. The island was recognized by the European powers and acknowledged by France on condition of a payment of \$30,000,000 as compensation to the former planters.

In 1844 the eastern or Spanish portion revolted against their Haitian oppressors and formed the Dominican Republic and in 1861 sought the protection of Spain which was dissolved in 1865. At present the financial administration of the island and collection of customs duties is in charge of the United States Government whose Marine forces became the military powers in 1913. In November,



### A HAPPY FAMILY.

IN HAITI THE WEATHER IS VERY WARM, AND PEOPLE LIVE MUCH OF THE TIME OUT-OF-DOORS. SCENES SUCH AS THIS PICTURE DESCRIBE ARE COMMON OCCURRENCES ON COUNTRY ROADS.

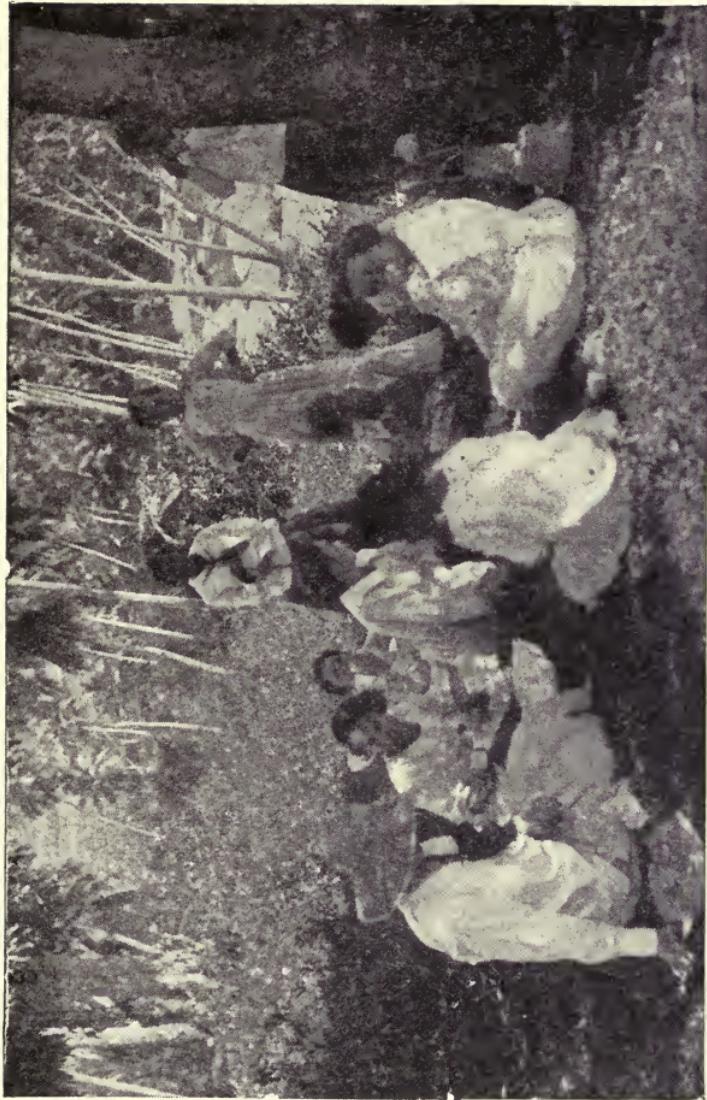
1915, the Haitian Congress ratified the treaty, establishing a virtual protectorate by the United States. Port au Prince is 1372 miles from New York.

### PORTE RICO

To the eastward of Haiti lies the island of Porto Rico. Its length is about one hundred miles from east to west and its breadth forty miles from north to south—nearly a rectangle in shape. Here we find our own flag. The climate is warm and the island is considered the most healthful in the West Indies. It is traversed by a mountain range averaging 1500 feet in height; rich alluvial tracts extend to the sea; and there are numerous well-wooded and fertile valleys. The chief towns are San Juan, the seat of government in the northeast, Ponce in the southwest, and Mayaguez in the west. The exports are chiefly sugar, tobacco, molasses, and hides. It is remarkable that there are hardly any flowers, birds, or wild animals in Porto Rico.

The island formerly belonged to Spain, but was taken by the United States in the Spanish-American War and is one of our most valued possessions. It has one of the finest harbors in the West Indies, with fortifications so strong that possession of them gives control of the island.

About three-fourths the size of the State of Connecticut, Porto Rico has the same number of inhabitants. This density of population is very serious since the isolated position of the island makes manufacturing impractical and the popula-



A PICNIC OF THE GIRLS' FRIENDLY SOCIETY, MAYAGUEZ, PORTO RICO

tion must earn its livelihood from the soil alone. The average density of population for the globe is 36 to the square mile. South America has five, and that with far more than the ordinary amount of fertility. Porto Rico, with her lands well-nigh drained of their productive power, has a population of 310 to the square mile. Then, too, the birth-rate exceeds the death-rate, so that the situation becomes more difficult and demands the assistance which religion and education alone can give.

A most important event in the history of this population occurred on the 2nd of March, 1917. It was at that time that the Jones' Bill of Congress (El Bill Jones, as it is called in Spanish) went into effect. By this law Porto Ricans received United States citizenship. When one remembers that in the Territory there is so large a population, over two and a half million—and that all the inhabitants are now citizens of the United States, it will be seen that the duty of the American Church towards the island is very great.

Though Porto Rico was evangelized 400 years ago there are large numbers of people today who are no longer willing to accept the Gospel their fathers believed in, but instead seek to satisfy the cravings of their religious instinct by running after spiritualism and theosophy—or agnosticism. There are likewise many who, living outside the cities, are not reached by any branch of the Church and are therefore in utter ignorance of the truths of religion. Besides these two groups there are sojourners from the United States and other English

speaking countries to whom the Church must minister. Hence bi-lingual clergy are a necessity; but then Spanish is learned quickly by all who go there. The most recent mission that has been established is that at El Coto, where in the midst of a plantation district the Church is ministering to people to whom no other minister of the gospel had ever gone.

The State can never meet the educational needs of a people. Even if it has enough school buildings and teachers it could not teach all that the people need to know, particularly people like the Porto Ricans. As a matter of fact our Government has made a wonderful beginning towards solving the school problem of the island.

It has built splendid buildings and equipped them well, but it will be generations before all the children can be reached—if ever at all, and in the meantime thousands of the future citizens of the United States have no opportunity to learn so much even as their A B C's.

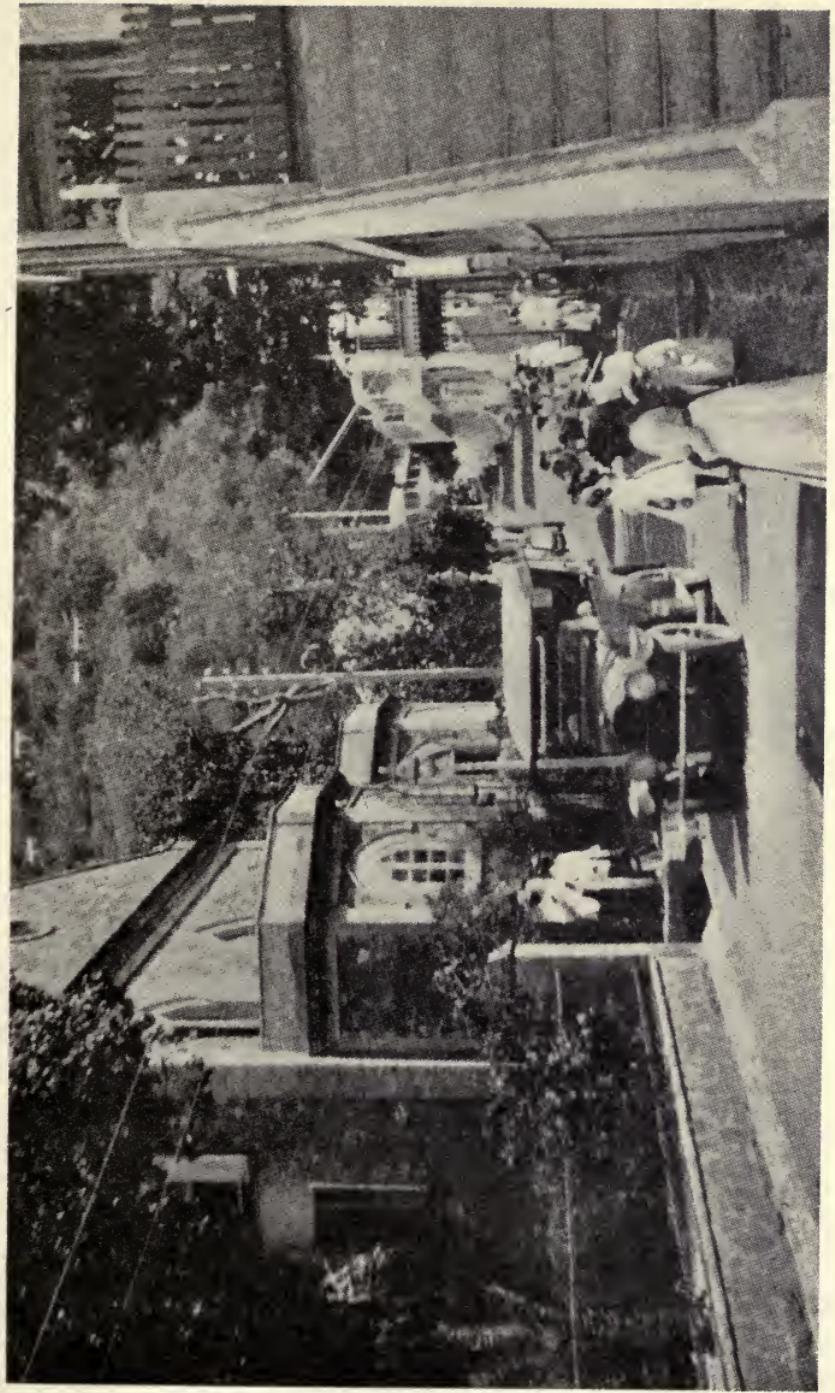
San Juan is 1399 miles from New York.

### THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

The Virgin Islands as they are now called are three small coral formations, fifty miles more or less, east and southeast of Porto Rico. On the map can be seen St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix and their respective geographical position to one another and to Porto Rico. They were discovered by Columbus on his second voyage, but not being as valuable as some of the other land-

falls that were made they were never occupied in sufficient force to assure permanent possession by any nation until 1733. At that time, after having been tossed about between the Spanish, English, Dutch and French adventurers for 250 years, they were finally occupied by the Danish West India Company, a corporation which though purely commercial was controlled by the King of Denmark as the largest stockholder. During the 184 years of Danish occupation they thrived fairly well. Their ports being free to all nations were patronized by ships from all parts of the world. Moreover, the Larger Antilles, not having yet been brought to such order as made planting profitable, much sugar was grown to advantage on these smaller islands. This last is an important point because those who criticize the American Government for allowing the Virgin Islands to be reduced to such a low economic state as is their lot today, do not realize that this situation would have come to pass no matter who was in control of them. Once the larger islands to the westward had been opened up to trade, and once plantation life on them had been begun, the Virgin Islands and all the islands which form a chain from Porto Rico southward to Trinidad were commercially doomed.

The United States bought St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix from Denmark, and the American flag was run up on the 2nd of April, 1917. The principal island is St. Thomas, about thirty-eight miles east of Porto Rico. Charlotte Amalia, the capital, is dependent for its water supply upon rain water col-



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, CHARLOTTE AMALIA.

THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN SUNDAY MORNING AS THE GOVERNOR'S CAR WAS LEAVING THE CHURCH. NOTE THE PICTURESQUENESS OF THE BACKGROUND.

lected in tanks. The surface of the island is hilly and the soil poor. There is a scanty population and the products are small and but little exported. The capital is a calling station for steamships, and its chief value to us consists in its position as a station in front of the Panama Canal.



## SOUTH AMERICA

Directly to the south lies South America and to the eastward of our journey lies the long fringe of islands known as the "Lesser Antilles" most of which now belong to Great Britain. Guadelupe and Martinique belong to France, while Venezuela owns several lying near its coast. Venezuela and Colombia form the southern boundary of the Caribbean Sea.

### VENEZUELA

The east coast of Venezuela was discovered by Columbus in 1498. Ojeda and Vespucci followed in 1499, and entering Lake Maricaibo, they found an Indian village, constructed on piles, to prevent inundations, which they named Venezuela, or little Venice, a name which was afterwards applied to the whole country.

The first settlement was made in 1520 by the Spaniards and it remained subject to Spain until, forming a republic with Colombia and Ecuador, it was declared independent in 1819.

In 1831 the states separated, and a condition of revolution and anarchy prevailed until 1863, when a constitution was formed establishing the republic and guaranteeing important privileges to the people.

Venezuela, the earliest discovered portion of South America, is nearly ten times the size of New England. The greater part is situated in the

basin of the Orinoco River. The central part of the country affords pasturage for immense herds of cattle, and the higher parts are covered with dense forests. Hides, tallow, cocoa, and coffee are the chief exports. Caracas, the capital and largest city, has been repeatedly damaged by earthquakes. La Guayra is its seaport. Valencia is the seat of an extensive commerce. Maraicabo, situated in a hot and unhealthful lowland is one of the principal ports.

The inhabitants are made up of several different peoples; whites of Spanish extraction; Indians, who are docile and industrious (these two are the miners, agriculturists and manufacturers of the country); some negroes and mixed races. The commerce is important and would be much more so were there well-constructed roads and other means of conveyance than mules. Great herds of wild horses and cattle roam over the central plains, and mules, goats and pigs are plentiful.

#### COLOMBIA

Colombia is a republic of South America, formed in 1861. Before this time the territory comprised in it bore the name of New Grenada. The capital is Bogota, situated at an altitude of 8,694 feet above sea level. In 1869 a treaty was concluded between Colombia and the United States, giving to the latter the right to construct an inter-oceanic canal across the Isthmus then called the Isthmus of Darien—now Panama.

The original natives of the country called "Chi-

cas," are said to have been frugal and industrious and to have developed a well-organized government. They were conquered by Quesada (1536-1537), and their descendants are now Christian and speak the Spanish language.

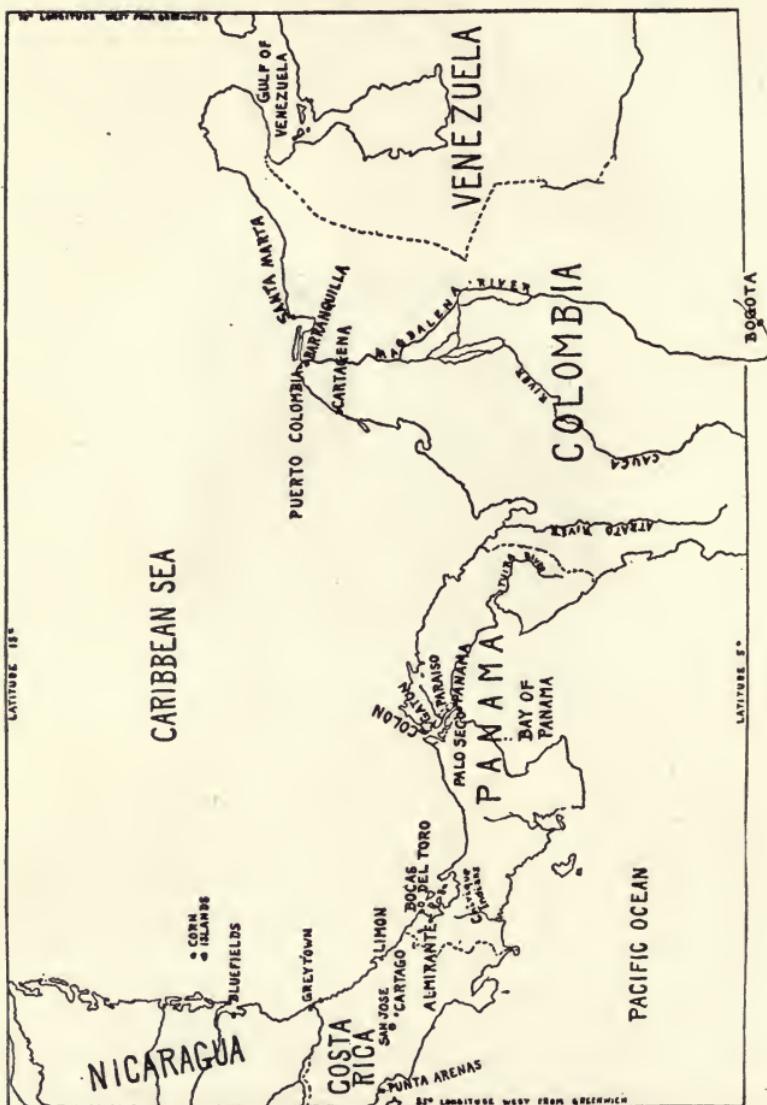
Perpetual snow covers the summits of the Cordillera Mountains; the rich vegetation of the tropics



NATIVE HUT, COLOMBIA.

covers the valleys; and in one day's journey the traveler may experience all the climates of the world. A system of parish schools with free primary education and many important helps to civilization and liberty have been established. The inhabitants rank first among the peoples of South America in literary and scientific culture.

Colombia borders on two oceans and is more than three times as large as California, and formerly



included within its limits the Isthmus of Panama. It has but few roads and short, isolated lines of railroads. Barranquilla is the principal seaport on the Caribbean Sea, and is situated 1783 miles from New York. Cattle and horses are extensively raised. Cinchona bark, coffee, gold, and hides are the leading exports.

The very name of Cartagena carries one back to the days of fascinating romance. When its foundation was taking place, the grandfathers of the Pilgrims were still babes or yet unborn. With its history during four centuries, missionary, explorer, pirate, follower of the Cross, seekers of gold—all of these are intimately associated. It is still one of the few walled cities of the world. The romance of history during its development was written daily.

Coming close to the city, we can see the ruins of an old convent with which it is crowned. A story goes that the terror-stricken nuns of the community plunged headlong into the sea when the city was once attacked by pirates.

We might tell of picturesque Santa Marta, of the Cathedral three centuries old, of the Bishop's palace just as old but painted in the gayest of colors, of the visit to San Pedro Alejandrius, where Bolivar, the Liberator, died; of the inexpressible charm of that *quinta*, its *patio*, its kitchen with its roof of deep red tiles, centuries old, of the chapel adjoining Bolivar's bedroom where daily the Holy Office of the Altar was said for him, but the steamer must be on its way and at the last, we come to our journey's end.

The very pier on which we land gives us an ob-

ject lesson in the fascinating history of the exchange of raw materials for finished products. Northbound copper from Peru and Chile; Cacao and ivory nuts from Ecuador; hides from Colombia, all these meet here and pass automobiles, sewing machines, shoes, and dress goods, on their way south.

Incidentally, we may learn that already we are south of Caracas, that Colon on the Caribbean is farther west than Panama, on the Pacific, that at Panama the sun rises as well as sets over the Pacific Ocean, and other local geographical facts to which stay-at-homes are strangers.

Colon is 1974 miles from New York.

And now, for a time, we go ashore, leaving our good ship to which we are to return for a much longer journey to our own possessions—Honolulu and the Philippines.

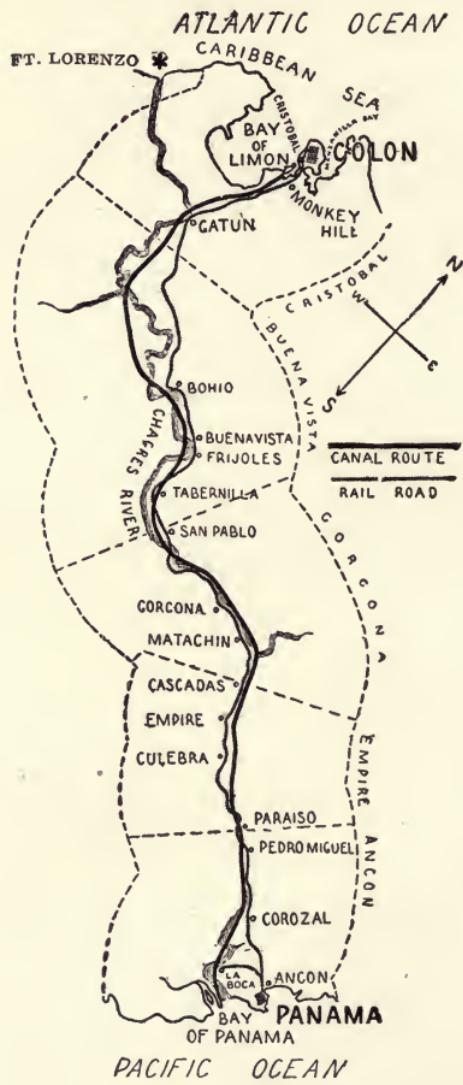
## THE CANAL ZONE

While the steamer waits before continuing on its way through the Canal, it is well to consider something of the days when the Spaniards were in possession, and when the route across the Isthmus was the great passage-way between the products of the lands to the southward on the Pacific Ocean and the trains of supplies and adventurers from Spain and the Atlantic ports.

On his last voyage, Columbus landed at the very spot where begins the Atlantic entrance to the Canal. The harbor in which he anchored his fleet and which he called the Bay of Ships is now named Limon Bay, and the present city is named for him by the Spanish word for his name, "Colon."

It is said that Columbus went into the interior until he reached the river Chagres. If he had kept on until he reached the Pacific Ocean, he would have been the first discoverer of the Pacific, but he was convinced that he had at last reached Asia and returned home to Spain.

Balboa had come from Haiti to aid the Spanish settlers at San Sebastian which had been founded in 1509, to the east of the Isthmus. With a few survivors, he built a new town, Santa Maria, which was the first settlement on the Isthmus. He was made Governor and married the daughter of an Indian chief. The Indians told him of a wonderful body of water beyond the mountains and of vast



THE CANAL ZONE

amounts of gold to be found far to the south. With a party of two hundred men, he journeyed, through the jungle and across the mountains, at about two miles a day, and finally, on September 25, 1513, he first saw the Pacific Ocean. Four days later, on its shore, he took possession in the name of the King of Spain.

Four years afterward he carried the complete parts of four ships across the Isthmus and reconstructed them on the Pacific side. Before he could sail down the coast in search of gold, a new Governor, Pedrarias, sent from Spain, unjustly tried him for treason and he was beheaded.

By a Papal bull the Portuguese had been given rights to all the lands to the eastward of a line drawn between the Canary Islands and the western coast line of Africa. This required all vessels to Asia to sail around Cape of Good Hope, the southern point of the African continent. The Spaniards having the right to all lands to the westward believed a shorter way could be found through the American continent, and every stream and river was explored to see if it might not lead to China.

In 1517, Saavedra, a Spanish engineer, suggested that a canal might be cut across the Isthmus of Panama almost 400 years before the Canal was actually constructed, and ten years later he made plans for a canal from the head of the Chagres River to Panama but its construction was decided to be impossible.

A road was built in 1521 between Panama on

the Pacific and Porto Bello, near Colon, on the Atlantic. Vast quantities of precious metals were carried across by relays of horses to Las Cruces and by boats on the Chagres River to Porto Bello.

Gold was stored at Panama and sent to Spain once a year in great convoys of ships.

The English adventurer, Sir Francis Drake, sailed around Cape Horn and attacked the treasure store house at Panama but he was driven off, although he seized a treasure train of mules on the Royal Post Road. Other attacks were made later on, and Henry Morgan captured and destroyed Porto Bello; in 1671 he destroyed the old city of Panama, which was later rebuilt six miles farther north and strongly fortified. After a time no more gold was brought from the mines of Peru, and Panama was quiet for many years.

Then in 1849 gold was discovered in California. Thousands of Americans came to the Isthmus, were pulled up the Chagres River in log canoes to Las Cruces, and carried on the backs of mules and Indian porters to Panama en route to San Francisco. The Isthmus route proved so much safer and easier than the long journey over the American desert to California that the Panama Railroad was built from Colon to Panama in 1855. It took five years to build it and it is said that it cost a human life for every tie that was laid.

In 1879 the French Government authorized Ferdinand De Lesseps to construct a canal across the Isthmus, but the revolutionists burned his supplies and the fever killed his workmen. He proposed to



RUINS OF OLD PANAMA CITY.

dig to sea level, which would have been a greater depth of sixty feet than the present completed canal; if he had worked for one hundred years with his tiny dirt cars, he could not have completed it. De Lesseps spent over \$260,000,000 and 25,000 men died to help excavate about 82,000,000 cubic yards of earth.

The United States had surveyed a route through Lake Nicaragua but before adopting it the French Canal Company agreed to sell to us for \$40,000,000, and their offer was accepted.

President Roosevelt was authorized to make terms with the Government of Colombia, and a treaty was signed at Washington; but the Colombian Congress rejected it in 1903, resulting in the great disappointment of the residents of the Isthmus. The Council of the city of Panama proclaimed an independent Republic, a government was organized, and on December 18th a treaty was made with the United States granting to the United States, forever, a zone of five miles wide on either side of the Canal.

The coast line of the zone and the islands in the Bay of Panama were ceded for the defense of the Canal. The cities of Colon and of Panama remained under the authority of the Panama Republic. The United States Government paid Panama \$10,000,000 and is to pay \$250,000 yearly.

Three problems faced the American: first, sanitation, for while the French had built hospitals for the sick, no effort had been made to prevent sickness; second, the Culebra cut through the moun-



A SECTION OF THE ANCON HOSPITAL, CANAL ZONE.

tain range; third, how to control the Chagres River. An Isthmian Canal Commission of seven men was appointed to build the Canal. They took two



WATERFRONT MARKET, PANAMA CITY.

years to prepare quarters and in the first year, 1904, thirty-five men died of yellow fever. It was found that this disease was carried from one person to another by the bite of a certain mosquito, which had become infected after biting a yellow fever victim; contact with a yellow fever patient does not carry the infection. The Americans cleaned up the cities in the zone, doing away with all cisterns and rain barrels and screening all living rooms.

At the end of the first year there were only three deaths from yellow fever and thus when there were no patients to bite and the infected mosquitoes had died, the fever was wiped out. The same method was used in treating malaria. During the building of the Canal about 40,000 workers were employed, the majority of whom were negroes from the island of Jamaica. They were very lazy, and several thousand peasants were brought from the northern part of Spain to speed up the work, and about six thousand American engineers and foremen were employed.

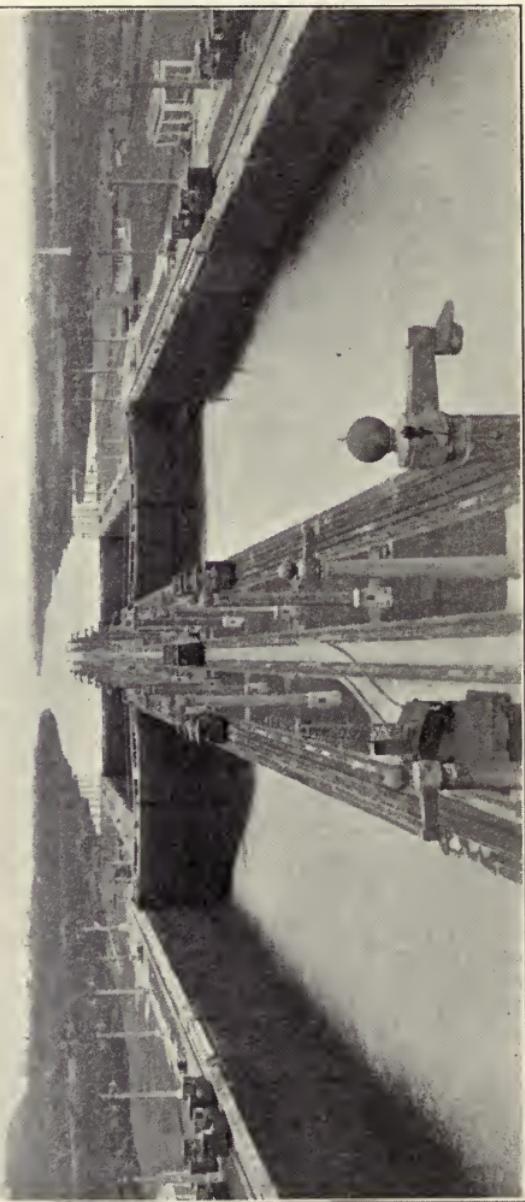
Food was brought from New Orleans and New York in refrigerator ships to Colon, and cars brought supplies every morning across the Isthmus to the hotels and camps. Everything belonged to the United States. Free services of doctors and dentists were provided.

Limon Bay, at the Atlantic end of the Canal, was two thousand miles from New York and to make it a safe harbor for the entrance, a breakwater was built to prevent the storms and tides from washing mud and sand into it, and a steam dredge is kept at work all the time to keep a channel open so that vessels may reach the entrance in deep water.

#### GATUN DAM AND LOCKS

It was found that a channel could not be built below the bed of the Chagres River which has been known to rise twenty feet in a single night and which would overflow the banks and fill the channel with mud.

GATUN LOCKS, PANAMA CANAL.

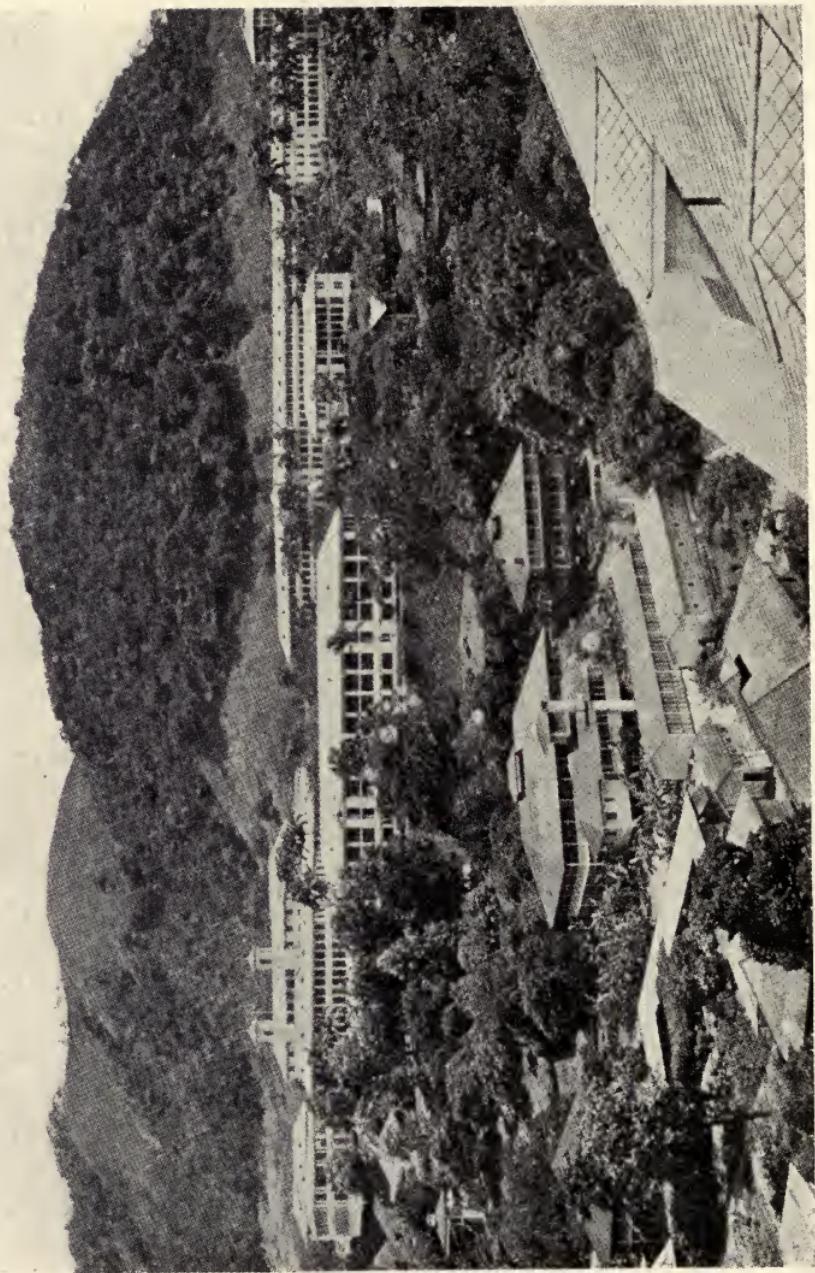


The Chagres River rising in the San Blas hills strikes the Canal line at Bas Obispo and zig-zags across it to Gatun, where the valley is only about a third of a mile wide. Here a dam was built which spreads the water out between the hills, forming a lake of nearly two hundred square miles. The surplus water runs off through a new outlet furnishing power to supply electricity to operate the Gatun locks that lift ships over the dam. There are six of these locks made in pairs so that one steamer can go up as another comes down. They are like a stairway of immense concrete tanks, each one thousand feet long and one hundred and ten feet wide. From the locks there is a clear channel from forty-five to eighty-five feet in depth for twenty-three miles through Gatun Lake to the Culebra Cut.

## THE CULEBRA CUT

Here the channel is only three hundred feet wide for a distance of nine miles, extending from Bas Obispo to Pedro Miguel, reaching a depth in some places of three hundred feet, blasted from solid rock. The chief difficulty in building this cut came from landslides—one mass of soft clay lying on a sloping edge of slippery rock and when it is dug away at the bottom, it begins to slide down into the cut; another caused by collapse of layers of rock which crumble with a side pressure against the bottom of the cut pushing it up 15 or 20 feet. This has proved the impossibility of digging a channel deep enough to build the canal at sea level.

ANCON HOSPITAL FROM THE ROOF OF THE TIVOLI HOTEL.

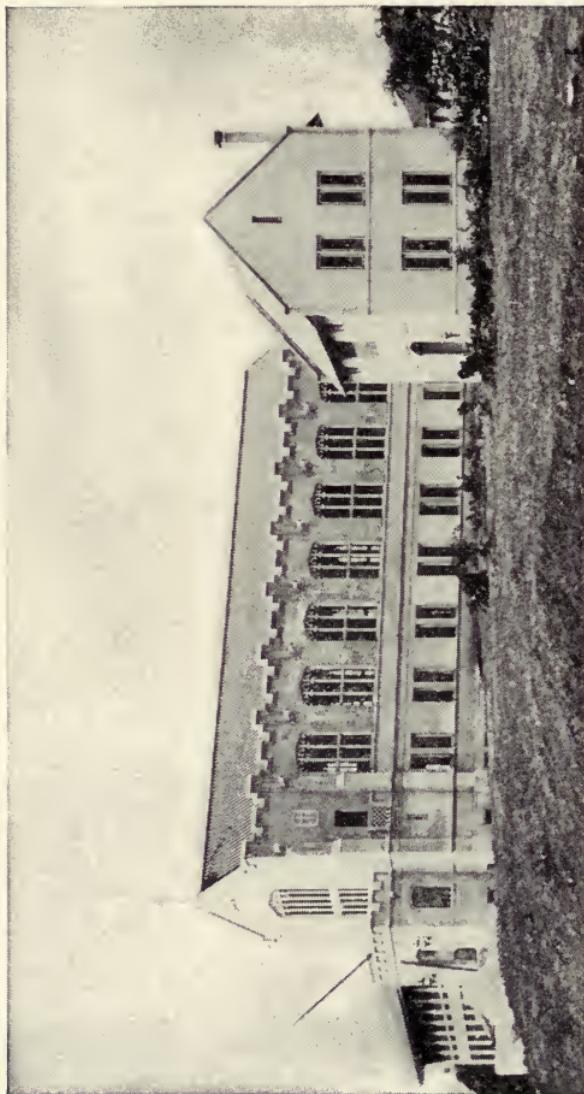


## MIRAFLORES LOCKS

The locks to bring ships to a level on the Pacific side are similar to those at Gatun. There is a single pair at Pedro Miguel which drops vessels about thirty feet, and two pairs at Miraflores (wonderful flowers) which lowers them to sea level. From Miraflores the Canal is dredged out at sea level to Balboa, and here the Pacific Ocean has a tide of twenty-one feet which required retaining walls to be built to prevent flooding the country at high tide. Immense quantities of earth and rock were used to build up the flat country which has been raised in some cases to a height of nearly one hundred feet over several square miles. To protect the Pacific entrance from storms, a breakwater was built from the shore to the islands in Panama Bay.

Ancon is the natural center of everything on the Pacific side. Here, or nearby, are the military headquarters, the civil administration building, Fort Amador, the great Hotel Tivoli and the government hospital, while within two blocks of the chapel is the line which bounds the city of Panama. It is a terminus of the railway and the focus of all the omnibus lines from the surrounding communities of Amador, Balboa, Quarry Heights and Pedro Miguel. It is beyond question an ideal place for a center of Church life and influence amongst our American citizens.

The building sites committee of the Panama Canal is making plans for future development. Ground is very precious and there are ever so many



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, BALBOA.

things the government must do with it and ever so many new buildings needed for the hospital and other improvements.



A STREET SCENE.

## ALONZO DE OJEDA

## PRONUNCIATION

Ojeda	o-ha'-dä
protege	pro-ta-zha'
Cuenca	koo-en'nä
Medina	ma-de'nä
Fonseca	fon-sa'-kä
Guadaloupe	ga-da-loop
La Navidad	lä-nä-ve-däd'
Cibao	se-ba'-o
cacique	ka-sek'
Caonabo	kä-o-nä-bo'

## ALONZO DE OJEDA

Before introducing the subject of this narrative, we should like to acquaint our readers with the history of the country which claims him as one of its most daring and warlike sons.

Spain was at an early age called Hispania. It was also known by the name of Iberia, from the river Iber, now Ebro. Its present name, Hispania, or Spain, is said to be derived from a Phoenician word which signifies "abounding in rabbits," as these animals were formerly very numerous in that country.

Spain was conquered by the Carthaginians about the year 238 before Christ, and afterward was long held by the Romans. These, in turn, were overthrown by the Goths from the north.

During the eighth century, a race of warlike soldiers from northern Africa crossed the Strait of Gibraltar, which is only eight miles wide, and drove out the Goths. These victorious infidels, followers of Mohamet, known also in Spain by the name of Moors, in a few years conquered the country, pushing their rule so far north that for a time the French people had the proverb, "Africa begins at the Pyrenees."

The Moors were among the ablest and most learned people of the time. They built great cities in Spain and ornamented them with hundreds of mosques, and beautiful palaces, the ruins of which

are still standing. For some years they held it as a dependency of the province of North Africa; later it was governed by emirs or independent chieftains.

Spain in the fifteenth century presents to our view a country where Catholic and Moor met in a fierce conflict. It was one vast school of war. In the land of Isabella the Cross and the Crescent were fighting the final struggle for life or death. The war had lasted eight hundred years.

On the second of January, 1492, in the same year that Columbus discovered America, the last of the Moorish kings yielded up the keys of that favorite seat of Moslem power.

Alonzo de Ojeda was born at Cuenca about the year 1465. He belonged to a respectable family and was brought up as a page in the service of the Duke of Medina.

Nothing seems more natural than that during such prolonged wars, and whilst political affairs were in such an unsettled state, the youth of the country were constantly drilled in hardy exercises and trained to arms. Every princely household was a military school. A chivalrous spirit pervaded the air and was transmitted from one generation to another.

Chivalry, or knighthood, was a military institution, which prevailed in almost every part of Europe, but in France, Spain and Germany it attained its greatest purity.

Those who were destined for chivalry were placed for education, at the age of seven years, in the castle of their father or that of some neighboring noble,

where they received the appellation of page, or valet, until they arrived at the age of fourteen, when they obtained the title of esquire and were admitted to the privilege of bearing arms. They were kept in active employment in the castle, being obliged to wait upon the lord and lady at home, and attend them abroad, and thus become accustomed to obedience and courteous conduct. Surrounded by noble and virtuous ladies and valiant knights, their first impressions were those of virtue, honor, and valor. From the ladies they learned the rudiments of religion; the lords instructed them in military exercises with blunt weapons.

A cousin of Alonzo de Ojéda, who bore the very same name, entered the Dominican Order and became a distinguished preacher. He stood in high esteem at the Spanish court, and was besides a particular friend of Archbishop Fonseca. Through his influence our cavalier was introduced to the great and powerful bishop. He made such a good impression on the latter that he at once became a great favorite.

History tells us that Christopher Columbus made four voyages to the New World. Among the noted personages who joined him on his second voyage in 1493, we find the name of Alonzo de Ojéda. He is described as a young cavalier about twenty-one years of age, small in stature, but of powerful strength and agility.

His dark countenance, full of expression, was lit up by a daring eye. He possessed great skill in handling all kinds of weapons and was noted as an

admirable horseman. One of his biographers presents him to us in the following terms: "Ojéda, destined for a long time to be the admiration of the wild and roving youth who flocked to the New World, was bold of heart, free of spirit, open of hand, fierce in fight, quick in quarrel, but ever ready to forgive and forget an injury."

His name is first mentioned in connection with the island to which Columbus gave the name of Guadaloupe. On arriving there the explorers found some women and children and many dreadful remains of cannibalism; the men were at the time engaged in procuring captives for their horrible banquets. The Spaniards were struck with terror at the sight of the human bones; skulls were used as vases and household utensils, and these objects convinced them that they were in reality in the abodes of the cannibals, the Caribs, of whom they had been told by the Hispaniola Indians.

The party now sailed for the island of Hispaniola. On their way they passed many smaller islands where they made only a short stay, for all were anxious to meet their countrymen in the colony of La Navidad. There Columbus had made a settlement, built a fort, and left a colony of thirty-nine men on his first voyage. Near the mouth of a small river an exploring party found the corpses of two men with the arms fastened in the form of a cross. The next day, not far from the same place, they saw two more dead bodies. The Spaniards could no longer distinguish their nationality, but suspicions were aroused. The ships sailed on in haste. It

was quite dark when they anchored at some distance from the shore. No light was seen. Columbus fired off two of the heaviest guns. The report echoed far along the shore but no answer was returned. When the next morning came, they found that a dead silence reigned over the place that had been so full of life a few months before. The fortress was a blackened ruin. Remnants of broken vessels and furniture were scattered all around.

Columbus now turned his thoughts to exploring the interior of the island of Hispaniola. From the natives he had heard of a rich region called Cibao, whose famous cacique was Caonabo, or the "Lord of the Golden House."

Early in January, 1494, Ojéda, who was chosen to lead the enterprise, set out with a small party of courageous followers. When they reached the interior not an Indian was to be seen.

On the evening of the second day the Spaniards came to a lofty mountain range. They slept on the summit. The next day they passed down the other side and entered the Indian towns, where they were received very kindly. Hospitality was showered on them. A few days later they entered the famous territory, but no one appeared to stop their progress.

The Spaniards at first saw no signs of great wealth. Cibao in the language of the natives signified a "stone." The mountains were scantily clothed with pines, but the sands of the mountain streams glittered with particles of gold. The natives skillfully separated these and handed them to the Spaniards without expecting any reward. The

stones were found to be streaked and impregnated with gold. One of the party affirms that he saw a mass of rude gold, weighing about nine ounces, which Ojéda himself had found in one of the brooks.

Not very long after this, Columbus appointed Ojéda commander of Fort St. Thomas. He set out for that place at the head of about four hundred men, sixteen of whom were horsemen. On reaching the Royal Plain, he heard that three Spaniards had been robbed by the Indians who had undertaken to carry them across a river. At the same time he learned that the culprits had been protected by their chief who shared the booty. Ojéda, as we have been told before, was a soldier of quick temper. He seized one of the thieves, ordered his ears to be cut off in the public square of the village, and then sent the offending chief, together with his son and nephew in chains to Columbus.

The Spaniards were at length made aware that their greatest enemy was Caonabo, the fierce chief of the golden mountains. The erection of Fort St. Thomas in the very center of his dominions enraged him. He sent spies to find out the number of soldiers in the fort. These brought back the news that the garrison was reduced to fifty men, and that the cacique, or chief, had planned to strike a signal blow.

Caonabo, the chief, assembled as many as ten thousand warriors and led them secretly through the forest, expecting to surprise the Spaniards; but he found Ojéda within his fortress, which was built

upon a hill and nearly surrounded by a river. The warlike chief kept up the siege for thirty days and reduced the Spaniards to great distress. Ojéda diminished the allowance of food, and seizing his opportunity, made bold sallies which cost Caonabo the bravest of his men, till the Indian chief, convinced that storming and starving were equally hopeless, decamped at the end of thirty days.

It was useless to think of making new settlements in Hispaniola as long as the fierce Caonabo retained his power and his hostile attitude. To make war on him in the midst of his mountain passes and strongholds would certainly be a work of time and peril. Columbus was perplexed.

Ojéda hearing of the difficulty, and following the bent on his daring nature, offered his services. He even promised to bring the chief alive and place him in the hands of the Discoverer of America.

He went with nine cavaliers to seek Caonabo in the midst of his own people. He promised to bestow on him no less a gift than the Angelus bell of Fort St. Thomas, if he would come to Isabella and make terms with Columbus.

This bell was the wonder of the whole island. When the Indians heard it ringing for mass, and beheld the Spaniards hastening towards the chapel, they imagined that it talked and that the white men obeyed it. They looked upon this bell as something supernatural, and said it had come from the skies. The chief had heard it at a distance in his prowlings about the settlement, and had longed to see it. The

offer was too tempting, and Caonabo agreed to go, but insisted on taking a large army with him.

One day in the course of their march, having halted near a small river, Ojéda produced a set of manacles of polished steel, so brightly burnished that they looked like silver. Caonabo was told to go to the river and bathe, after which he should be decorated with these ornaments, which had come from heaven, and which were worn by the monarchs of Spain at court festivities. Afterward, mounted on the horse of Ojéda, he should return like a Spaniard to his astonished subjects.

Dazzled by the glitter of the manacles, and flattered with the idea of mounting one of those proud war horses, he repaired to the river, and having bathed, he was assisted to mount behind the cavalier and the shackles were adjusted. He anticipated no danger with his army around him.

Ojéda made a few circles with his delighted captive before the eyes of all the Indians and then set spurs to the horse while the other cavaliers closed around him, and, drawing their swords, threatened the chief with instant death if he made the least noise or showed signs of resistance. They bound him with cords to Ojéda to prevent his falling off, put spurs to their horses, dashed across the river, and set off with their prize. The daring Ojéda entered Isabella in triumph with his wild Indian.

From that time Caonabo had the most enthusiastic reverence for the brave Ojéda. In the presence of Columbus, however, he did not show the slightest sign of respect; but when Ojéda entered

the room he rose at once to salute the man who had dared to carry him off in open day with all his warriors looking on. He continually cast angry and threatening looks at the Spaniards, Ojéda expected, and gloried in the destruction of La Navidad, boasting, moreover, that he had been prowling around Isabella with the intention of striking a blow of the same kind there.

The Indian chiefs had gathered around the brother of Caonabo and resolved to attack the Spanish Settlement. They invited all the tribes to join them.

Columbus could muster only two hundred and twenty men, twenty of which were cavalry. The Spaniards were commanded by Don Bartholomew, the brother of Columbus, and by Alonzo Ojéda. He divided the army into small troops. Suddenly the infantry advanced from various sides. The sound of drums and trumpets was heard, followed by a deadly volley of firearms. The brave savages were terrified; a panic seized them. It seemed a mighty force was moving down upon them.

To heighten the confusion, Ojéda and his horsemen appeared. The Indians stood in awe at the sight; they even imagined that the horse and the rider formed one animal. Ojéda's troops charged furiously. They dealt fatal blows with lance and sword, trampling the Indians under foot. At the same time twenty bloodhounds, which the Spaniards had brought with them, were let loose, and rushing upon the savages, tore them to pieces.

It was a short battle and a complete victory for

the Spaniards. All parts of the island were thereby reduced to obedience.

Ojéda had spent three years at Hispaniola. His reputation as a soldier of unrivaled skill and matchless bravery had greatly increased. He sailed with Columbus for Spain in 1496, but did not accompany him on his third voyage.

His desire at this time was to fit out an expedition himself. He was encouraged by Bishop Fonseca, who was still his patron, and who provided him with a commission, or certificate, conferring military rank.

A mere soldier of fortune, far from being rich, he now looked about for means to fit out a little fleet. Some friends, who were wealthy merchants, helped him, and in a short time he had command of a squadron of four vessels.

Among his first associates we find a very skillful navigator, Amerigo Vespucci, a merchant of Florence, who sought in the New World for fortune which he could not find in the Old.

In May, 1499, they set sail, and after a voyage of twenty-four days they reached South America, several hundred miles south of the Orinoco River. They coasted northward and at a convenient harbor, Ojéda built a two-masted, square-rigged vessel. The Indians were friendly; they came in numbers to see the Spaniards and supplied them with fish, venison and cassava in abundance. They desired to gain their protection against the cannibals of the Carribee Islands. The latter often entered their settlements near the coast and carried off people,

whom they afterward devoured. Ojéda promised them aid. With a number of Indian guides he sailed on for seven days, when he came to the place of abode of this race. A great number appeared at the shore. They were hideously painted savages, and yelled boldly and defiantly.

The commander ordered his men to put out the boats and provided each with a small cannon. During the time arrows flew thickly and swiftly at the Spaniards. The cannibals even dashed into the water to meet their opponents.

As soon as Ojéda opened fire, the savages staggered and trembled and soon took to their heels. When the Spaniards leaped ashore, however, they returned, and now a fierce hand-to-hand fight began. At the point of the sword the man-eaters were finally driven to the woods.

The following day the shore swarmed again with naked, armed and painted savages. The Spaniards, fifty-seven in number, rushed toward them and routed them with great slaughter.

After taking a well-deserved rest of some three weeks, the party sailed for the mainland once more. They arrived at a vast gulf, or bay, which they entered and to their great surprise, beheld a village on its eastern shore. The latter attracted their attention. It consisted of some twenty large houses, which were shaped like bells, and built on piles driven into the bottom of the water, which in this part was quite clear and not deep. Each house was provided with a drawbridge and with canoes by which communication was carried on.

The village bore a striking resemblance to Venice, the Italian city; therefore Ojéda named the city Venezuela, or Little Venice, by which name it is known to the present day.

The Spaniards continued their explorations and came to a port which the Indians named Maracaybo. Ojéda and his companions were here treated like angelic beings and every possible mark of kindness and veneration was heaped on them.

Before departing, the commander ordered that a cannon be discharged. Amerigo Vespucci relates that at its sound the timid savages plunged into the water like so many frogs from a bank. When they saw that no harm was done them their fear vanished, and they returned to bid their visitors a fond farewell.

Ojéda sailed along the coast until he came to Point Gallinas. Here the condition of his vessels warned him to discontinue his voyage and to have the ships refitted.

This being done, he rambled among the neighboring islands, seized a large number of natives whom he carried off with him on his homeward voyage. The unfortunate Indians were sold in the slave markets and the money divided among himself and his followers.

In consideration of his services a grant of land was given him; he was made governor of the province he had discovered, was authorized to fit out any number of ships not exceeding ten, at his own expense, and had the right to trade in all kinds of merchandise.

This commission was no sooner in his hands, than he began to fit out some vessels. Two of his friends opened their purses, and in a short time four vessels were ready.

In 1502 Ojéda again set sail and the little squadron soon reached South America near the mouth of the Orinoco. Next they coasted along the northern border, reached the Republic of Venezuela, and finally cast anchor in the port destined as the seat of government. The native Indians had not been consulted; so one day when a party of Spaniards landed to obtain fresh water, a shower of arrows met them and obliged them to return to their ships. Ojéda provoked at this treatment, immediately landed, and gave the Indians such a thrashing that they sued for peace on any terms.

The Spanish settlement flourished and a fortress was built. Officers dealt out provisions twice a day, but at last these grew scarce. The Indians became hostile. Ojéda, in several of the raids which he led on the Indian villages, collected a considerable quantity of gold which he locked up in a strong box, taking possession of the keys.

Want increased and murmurs grew loud against the governor. Finally two of the officers seized him, put him in irons, and brought him on board the ship. The colonists followed, and in a few days the ships were near the coast of Hispaniola. One night when all was quiet and the officers and crew were enjoying a refreshing sleep, Ojéda, the prisoner, confident of his strength and his skill as a swimmer, let himself slide down the side of the ship into the water. His

arms were free, but not his feet. The weight of his irons was about to sink him and he was obliged to shout for help. Quickly a boat was sent to his relief, and he was brought back half dead to his companions.

Ojéda appealed to the King, and orders were immediately issued to restore his property. But the strong box was empty and there was little to restore.

Ojéda was a ruined man, and for some years we lose sight of him.

In 1508 we find him once more in Hispaniola with a rather light purse, but as yet an untamed spirit.

On his last voyage, in 1502, Columbus has discovered the Isthmus of Darien. The fame of the riches of this region had spread to Spain and the King was anxious to plant colonies on its coast. Ojéda was selected for the enterprise; but he was not to have the whole government to himself.

King Ferdinand divided the Isthmus into two provinces, appointing Ojéda ruler of the southern division, while a brave and accomplished courtier, James de Nicuesa by name, was chosen to colonize the northern part.

Both began to fit out a fleet. Ojéda at the time had no money, but he had friends who came to his assistance. A ship and two brigantines were soon ready, and accompanied by two hundred men, he set out to the New World.

Nicuesa did not spare his means in fitting out a fleet.

The island of Jamaica was designed by the court as the base of supplies for both provinces. Here the

two fleets met and the quick eye of Ojéda at once noticed the superiority of Nicuesa's fleet; he felt rather mortified on meeting his wealthy rival. Very soon the two governors were involved in a quarrel. Ojéda desired to settle the matter with his well-tried sword, but his rival would not accept the challenge. Happily, no blood was shed.

In November, 1509, Alonzo de Ojéda sailed from San Domingo. He had on board Francis Pizarro, the future discoverer and conqueror of Peru, and Hernando Cortez would have gladly joined the expedition if sickness had not prevented.

They reached the harbor of Cartagena in a short time. After landing, Ojéda, accompanied by some priests and a part of his force, prepared to take possession of the country. A large crowd of savages came forward to meet the Spaniards, and one of the missionaries read the document which had been prepared for the solemn occasion. Having finished, Ojéda tried to gain their friendship, holding up some shining presents. The fierce red men were not so easily won; they assumed a defiant attitude and loudly sounded the battle cry. At this moment the worthy old pilot of the fleet came forward and warned the governor to leave the hostile shore at once, since its wild inhabitants were accustomed to fight like poisonous reptiles, using swords made of palm wood and arrows dipped in a deadly poison. But his advice was in vain for Ojéda had already brandished his sword. The Spaniards followed their leader and pursued the flying Indians for miles into the interior. Finally they came to a dense

Bancroft Library

wood where they found the savages entrenched. At the sight of the Spaniards the latter fled to the woods in terror.

Coming to a village which had been deserted by the Indians, the Spaniards believing themselves safe, divided into bands in a careless manner, roved from house to house and seized everything of value. Suddenly an army of Indians surrounded them; they fought like lions, but being outnumbered, fell one by one beneath the heavy war clubs.

Ojéda quickly collected a few soldiers about him and sheltered himself within a small enclosure. The poisoned arrows flew quickly; he warded them off with his shield. He then threw himself on his knees, and fought as well as he could. His companions were all slain, and the same fate would have befallen him, had not the good old pilot arrived with a few followers. Having heard of the peril of his commander, he resolved to save him or to die with him. At this moment Ojéda sprang forth like a lion, fought the Indians on both sides, and disappeared. The pilot, de la Cosa, was wounded by several arrows. Still, he defended himself until all his comrades except one were killed. Feeling that his death was nigh, he begged that his companion would fly from the scene of terror, and try to find Ojéda and bring him the news of the death of his faithful pilot. Several days passed by; the Spaniards who had remained on the ships in the harbor were alarmed. "What has become of the governor?" they asked each other. A party went out in search of him and his followers, but no trace of them could be found.

One day some of the crew were coasting along the shores and came to a dense forest. All along the shores of the waters in the tropics mangrove trees are found. On the matted roots, at some distance, they spied something that looked like a human figure. They left their boat, took a small canoe and drew near. They stood before their governor, who still bravely grasped his sword and buckler, but was speechless. Food and wine were given him in small quantities, and in a short time he recovered his senses. As soon as he was able to speak, he related to his astonished hearers the terrible encounter with the Indians. After his escape he had pushed onward alone trying to reach his ships. His strength at last had given way, and finally he fell to the earth unconscious of all that happened.

On his person not a single scratch could be seen, while his buckler showed the dents of some three hundred arrows.

These hostile shores had no longer any attraction for the Spaniards, not even for the dauntless Ojéda. The sad fate of his companions cast a gloom over him. The party embarked, sailed across the gulf, and selected a suitable site for a settlement on the coast of Darien. Ojéda named it San Sebastian in honor of the saintly martyr who had been killed by arrows. He invoked the saint's protection against the poisoned weapons of the savages.

The next work was to explore the country. The native Indians were, like most of their savage brethren, of a warlike nature; the Spaniards often had disputes with them, and were filled with terror

when, with hideous yells and wild shouts, they pursued them to the entrance of their town.

As a rule misfortune never comes alone. Provisions grew scarce, the colonists became weaker, and the Indians increased in boldness.

Ojéda repeatedly rushed forth at the head of his troops. His dauntless spirit was the only thing which never changed. Being remarkably swift of foot, he was always the first to make the Indians feel the weight of his blows. Washington Irving writes of him: "He slew more of their warriors with his single arm than all his followers together."

The savages were led to imagine that he must have a charmed life, since they could never wound him. They formed a plot to test the truth and prepared a bundle of poisoned arrows. Some of their party lay in ambush while others approached the settlement. Ojéda pounced upon them and the latter quickly retreated, while the former surrounded him. A volley of arrows flew at him; one entered his thigh; and with yells of triumph and joy the dusky savages ran back into the woods.

The bold commander, who had never been wounded in battle before, now lay at death's door. In his agony he thought of a remedy. He called for his surgeon and, under pain of death ordered him to apply two iron plates which had been raised to a white heat to the two openings made by the arrow. The doctor hesitated for a while, but finally complied with his wish. Ojéda endured the frightful operation without a murmur. The wound healed, and we may imagine the astonishment of the dusky

savages when they saw him once more leading his faithful warriors against them.

The colony of San Sebastian was at this time in a starving condition. From their fierce neighbors the settlers could expect no relief. Ojéda had ordered provisions from San Domingo, but had received no reply. One day a ship was seen in the distance. All hearts were filled with joy at the thought of the expected aid; they were, however, doomed to sad disappointment. The vessel turned out to be the property of pirates. Nevertheless, Ojéda purchased some provisions for his starving colony from the captain, and finding that no other help arrived, he resolved to sail for Hispaniola himself. Francis Pizarro was left in command of the town, and Ojéda boarded the vessel. The voyage was very stormy and daily disasters occurred.

Ojéda, born to command, had never been accustomed to obey. He soon had a quarrel with the captain which might have been settled very quickly with his sword had it not been for the crew. Being subdued by the latter, he was chained and kept under strict guard. A terrible storm began to rage, and the sailors were filled with fear and apprehension. In the midst of this danger they remembered that their prisoner was not only a soldier but also a sailor, and promised to take off his irons on condition that he would steer the vessel during the remainder of the voyage. He accepted, and took his place at the helm; but it is impossible for human skill to battle with the elements when they are let loose. The vessel was completely shattered, and

all the hardy pilot could do was "to run it ashore on the southern coast of Cuba."

While the disheartened crew gave way to despair, Ojéda saw there was no other course open excepting to push on to the other side of the great island and then, if possible, cross over the strait to Hispaniola.

The party began their wearisome march. No path or road was to be met. It was the fearless spirit of Ojéda alone that led over plain and bog and mountain, through forest and marsh. They suffered intensely. Hunger and thirst gnawed to the very bone; nowhere was it safe to pass the night except in the branches of the trees. Several of the party were drowned in swimming the rivers, while others daily sank to the grave beneath the burden of their miseries. The worst was yet to come. The last ray of hope vanished when they came to a marsh so wide and extensive that it seemed boundless.

One day they had made very little progress in their march through the swampy woods. When evening came the resolute spirit of Ojéda for once gave way for a moment to despondency. There and then he made a vow to the Blessed Lady, that he would build a chapel at the first Indian village at which they should arrive, and would leave her picture there as an object of veneration to the children of the forest, if she conducted him alive through this frightful danger.

After thirty days of toil and intense suffering, the weary and famished travelers, led by the crafty

Ojéda, succeeded in crossing the morass. They noticed a footpath and followed it. When they arrived at the Indian village to which it led, they were received with the greatest kindness. The simple Indians, seeing how exhausted they were, tried to console them in every way in their power. Alas, of the seventy men who had left the ship only thirty-five survived, and nearly all of these were half dead. The Indian chief, in fact the whole tribe, lavished the greatest kindness on them, and after some time they were once more restored to health.

Ojéda at once prepared to fulfill his vow. With the help of the Indians he built a chapel in the village and placed an altar therein. The painting of the Holy Virgin, which had been for so many years his most cherished and inseparable companion on sea and on land, in danger and misfortune, was carefully hung above the altar.

Then Ojéda began to instruct the Indians and explained to them the truths of the Catholic faith. They listened very attentively and tried hard to understand the meaning of his words.

All the Indians showed great veneration for the picture. They kept the chapel neat and clean and decorated it with flowers and all kinds of cotton hangings.

We are told that a few years later the venerable Bishop Las Casas arrived at the village. He found the chapel well preserved and the picture regarded with fond veneration. Having heard much of this famous relic, he offered to give the chief in exchange

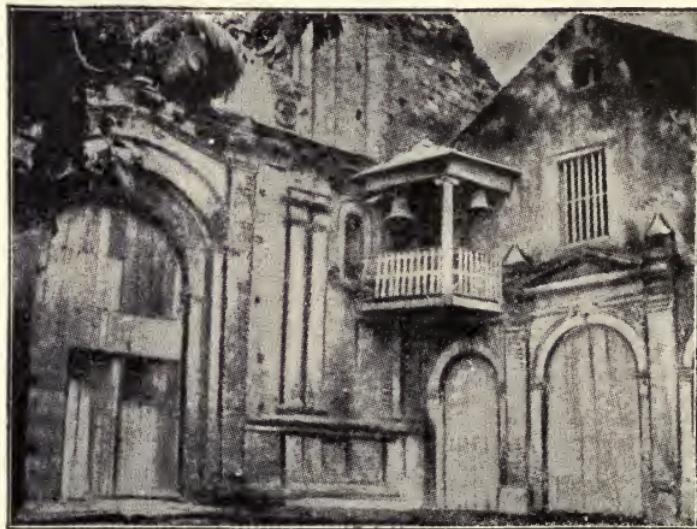
a statute of the Blessed Virgin which he had brought with him. The next morning the Bishop came to the chapel, said Mass, and baptized a number of children. The chief did not appear, and the picture could not be found. On inquiring, Bishop Las Casas learned that the Indian had fled to the woods during the night, carrying off with him his beloved picture. Messengers were sent to assure him he would not be deprived of his treasure, but he refused to return. Only after the departure of the Spaniards did he venture back to the village. The picture was again replaced in the chapel.

Ojéda was about forty-five years old when he died. Of the last years of his life very little is known; they were spent in poverty and obscurity in San Domingo.

*Bartholomew De Las Casas* (Bär-tō'-lo-mū dā läs kä'-säs), a Spanish prelate, born in Seville in 1474. In his nineteenth year he accompanied his father, who sailed with Columbus, to the West Indies. Five years afterward he returned to Spain, and pursuing his studies, he entered the Dominican Order. He accompanied Columbus in his second voyage to Hispaniola. In 1510 he was ordained priest at San Domingo, and on the conquest of Cuba settled there, and distinguished himself by his humane conduct towards the oppressed natives. In his efforts to convert and civilize them, he traversed the wilderness in various directions, sparing not time or labor or life itself when their interests were concerned. To defend their wrongs, he made several voyages to Spain and wrote many volumes. A rich bishöpic was offered him, which he declined; later he accepted one that was poor. In 1551, he returned to Spain and retired to the monastery at Valladolid, where he died at the advanced age of ninety-two.

“Saint Dominic and its Venerable Bells” stands as a monument of which the spirits of its builders of nearly two centuries ago need not be ashamed. Saint Dominic is now an old tumble-down, abandoned church, one of the many churches on which much of the energy and wealth of the pious community of Panama, or Darien, was expended. In an angle, between the walls of Saint Dominic’s is

a belfry of practical kind beneath whose time-stained bells the priests were wont to teach their flocks. What eloquent tales of by-gone days the now listless tongues of those silent, venerable bells might tell! Though silent now, these bells are not abashed; they stand out from the ruins facing the public street, as though waiting for the touch of the vanished reverent hand that evoked such sweet music in the long ago



ST. DOMINIC AND ITS BELLS









48  
Int

